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EMO

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Manitoba
Emergency
Measures
Organization

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY 1989

EVACUATION OPERATIONS

FOREWORD

Manitoba's forested areas received minimal precipitation over the winter; this coupled with the continuing drought conditions of the past few years resulted in a magnitude of forests fires well in excess of previous recorded years in provincial history.

The provincial response directed to the safety, health and welfare of the citizens of Manitoba is documented within this report. The fire suppresssion activities of Manitoba Natural Resources are reported independently by the Regional Services Division of the department.

The forest fires of 1989 resulted in two separate and distinct periods of potential threat to Manitoba communities. The resultant emergency evacuations operations in May and July, in support of local authorities, are documented separately within the first two sections of this report. Comments and recommendations respecting the emergency operations are combined within the third section of the report and all reports of involved departments and agencies are attached as annexes to the report.

Fred Zeggil, Director
Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization.

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA 91-02300/

FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY 1989

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ATTACHMENTS

Natural Resources Report
Northern Affairs Report
Emergency Health Services Report
Emergency Social Services Report
Environment Report
Labour, Fire Commissioner's Report
Highways and Transportation Report
Government Services Report
Culture aand Heritage, Information Services Report
Rural Development Report
Manitoba Hydro Report
Manitoba Telephone System Report
Royal Canadian Mounted Police Report
Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board Report

FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY 1989

SECTION 1 - MAY FIRES EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

1.0 GENERAL

Throughout the forest fire season April 1 to October 15, Natural Resources has traditionally informed the Emergency Measures Organization of the forest fire threat level on a daily basis. Information is usually passed by facsimile, telephone calls or weekly fire briefings. The forest fires of May 1989 were no different in regards to the above methods of notification.

Natural Resources Fire Program made reference to the province's overall outlook in the May 1 "Manitoba Provincial Forest Fire Summary".

> "Drought conditions are critical with the exception of the Southeastern corner. The cooler temperatures of the past month have helped fire suppression efforts, serious fire problems are likely to occur."

By May 9 the Fire Program was aware of increased incidence of fires. They noted a 54% increase in number of fires over 1988 levels. Furthermore, they noted extreme conditions in existence and forecasted fire problems over the next few days.

Thus, there was adequate warning of the potential fire threat, however, little could be done to prevent a serious outbreak of fire. Central Task Team (CTT) representatives were alerted several days prior to the outbreak of serious fires of the 10 - 13 of May.

The forecast turned out to be very accurate as the extreme conditions led to a serious outbreak of fires on May 10. Threatening fires broke out on essentially three fronts first in the area west of Lake Winnipegosis between Red Deer Lake and the Porcupine Provincial Forest; second in the Interlake, with starts as far north as Easterville and as far south as Ashern; and third fires erupted on the east side of the south basin of Lake Winnipeg near Manigotagan.

Evacuations were started on May 10 and residents were forced from several communities over the next few days. In total, May fires caused the ordered or voluntary evacuations, leading to the partial or complete removal of residents, from 15 communities. The total number of known evacuees was approximately 1500.

By May 11 the Provincial response structure and associated resources were fully mobilized. EMO had alerted Provincial Agencies to be on standby for a possible major disaster. The Department of Natural Resources sought and received, through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), additional fire suppression equipment from other provinces, territories and the United States.

SECTION 1 - MAY FIRES EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

1.0 GENERAL (Continued)

Over the period of the following nine days an extremely serious fire emergency unfolded. In addition to the approximately 15 communities which were completely or partially evacuated, many others were threatened. By the end of May the cumulative effect of the fires had yielded the worst fire season since record keeping began in 1930.

By May 20, nearly 773,689 hectares (1,911,786 acres) of Manitoba had burned. This represented almost 90% of the Nation's total at that time. The enormous size of some of the fires is reflected in the fact that Manitoba had only 14% of the total number of reported fires. It should be noted, however, that different provinces apply different criteria to determine reportable fires. Ninety-five percent of the 1.9 million acres was consumed during the period of the fire emergency between 10 - 20 May.

The fires also destroyed 20 homes, 16 cottages and at least 30 other out buildings. In the agricultural areas many hundreds of miles of fence line were burned and over 60 head of cattle are known to have perished.

2.0 PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRUCTURE

2.1 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL/MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE

Minister of Government Services, Responsible for the administration of The Emergency Measures Act
Minister of Natural Resources
Minister of Northern Affairs

2.2 PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES

2.2.1 Key Provincial Departments/Agencies

Manitoba Natural Resources
    Fire Program
Manitoba Highways and Transportation
    Air Division
    Construction and Maintenance
Manitoba Family Services
    Emergency Social Services
Manitoba Government Services
    Emergency Measures Organization
Manitoba Northern Affairs
Manitoba Health
    Emergency Health Services
Manitoba Labour
    Fire Commissioner's Office

2.2 PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES (Continued)

2.2.2 Supporting Provincial Department/Agencies

Manitoba Rural Development
Manitoba Agriculture
Manitoba Hydro
Manitoba Telephone
Manitoba Information Services (Culture, Heritage and Recreation)
Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

2.2.3 Federal Departments/Agencies

Emergency Preparedness Canada (EPC)
Department of National Defence
    Prairie Region Operations
Atmospheric Environment Services
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Canadian Inter-Agency Forest Fire Centre

2.2.4 Municipal

City of Winnipeg
    Emergency Social Services

2.3 CENTRAL TASK TEAM (CTT)

The Central Task Team was comprised of:
EMO Co-ordinator
Staff Representatives from:
    Natural Resources
    Highways and Transportation
    Agriculture
    Community Services
    Health
    Education
    Government Services
    Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board
    Manitoba Hydro
    Manitoba Telephone System
    Chief Medical Examiner's Office
    Fire Commissioner's Office
    Northern Affairs
    RCMP
    Emergency Preparedness Canada
    Department of National Defence
    (Prairie Region Headquarters)

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

3.1 **May 10** - EMO was notified of the Red Deer Lake fire which was threatening local residents. EMO dispatched the Northern Municipal Advisor to this area to help advise local authorities during this emergency. Later, that day, the 60 residents of Red Deer Lake were evacuated to the neighbouring community of Barrows. In the Interlake a separate fire threatened the Fisher River Indian Reserve and the adjacent Northern Affairs community of Fisher Bay. Upon being advised of this threat the Department of Northern Affairs dispatched staff to the area.

3.2 **May 11** - Department of Northern Affairs support staff arrived in the community of Barrows to assist the Red Deer Lake evacuees. EMO received notification that the communities of Dauphin River Reserve, Anama Bay, Harwill, Hollow Water Reserve, Ashern, Seymourville, Easterville, Moosehorn, Grand Rapids Reserve, and Jackhead Reserve were threatened. With the mounting threat EMO established contact with Chief Wesley Hart of the Fisher River Reserve. Subsequently thirty people from the Fisher River Personal Care Home were evacuated to Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg because of the intolerable levels of smoke encountered, as well as the forest fire threat to the community. In addition some other residents (mostly senior citizens) of the reserve were evacuated to the nearby Peguis Reserve. With another fire menacing the Jackhead Reserve, approximately 170 residents were moved to the Peguis Reserve. Some of the affected communities did not require full evacuation. For example some local movement of people, constituting a voluntary evacuation was reported on the Crane River Reserve. This situation was probably repeated, but perhaps unreported, in many of the other communities at risk. The very tense situation in the Interlake prompted the Reeve of the Local Government District of Fisher to declare a state of local emergency for the LGD at 9:00 A.M. on the 11th. Later in the day approximately 350 residents of Manigotagan, Aghaming, Hollow Water Reserve, and Seymourville were evacuated. Many of the evacuees were housed in Pine Falls and Powerview, but some were transported on to Winnipeg. With the onset of fairly extensive evacuations, EMO requested the Gimli Reception Facility to be readied for evacuees.

As the threat to Ashern materialized, contingency plans were made to evacuate residents to Ste. Rose Du Lac and Dauphin. There was some concern that the forest fire would cut off access across the Narrows via Highway 68. During the emergency, Highways 514, portions of 68 and 6 were cut off or threatened by fire. This left Highway 325 open as a possible evacuation route, but it was threatened by fire also. EMO's Western Municipal Advisor established communications with the municipalities of Ste. Rose Du Lac and Dauphin to request they prepare for the accommodation of evacuees from the Ashern area

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.2 **May 11** (Continued)
should they be evacuated. The officials of these two towns obliged EMO and made preparations. Along with the full mobilization of provincial resources, EMO opened the Emergency Co-ordination Centre for 24-hour operations and also requested air support from the Federal Department of National Defence. A 40 passenger Chinook helicopter was deployed from Edmonton to Winnipeg so it could standby for emergency evacuations, if necessary.

Also on the 11th the evacuated residents of Red Deer Lake were permitted to return home since the direct threat to the community had now substantially abated.

3.3 **May 12** - Severe fire conditions continued, with little or no relief from the weather. Many of the areas of concern continued to be closely monitored, especially the Interlake and the fire near Manigotagan. Close to 100 of the evacuees from the Jackhead Reserve started arriving at the Gimli facility in the early morning hours. Approximately 200 residents of the Dauphin River Reserve and the neighbouring Northern Affairs community of Dauphin River were evacuated to Gypsumville. Also on the 12th, about 40 residents from the Northern Affairs community of Big Black River were air-evacuated to Poplar River 20 kilometres to the south.

With the continuing problems in the vicinity of Ashern the Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Siglunes declared a state of local emergency at 10:00 P.M. The Central Task Team met on the 12th to aid in the interdepartmental coordination of emergency response. One of the important issues highlighted at the meeting was the potential damaging effects that the heavy smoke conditions, experienced in some areas, could have on hydro transmission. There was a definite threat of the carbon in smoke contaminating insulators and causing ""flash-overs"". These, in turn, could result in a loss of up to 70% of the provincial power requirements.

3.4 **May 13** - The situation with the fires throughout the province continued to be very serious. All regions with the exception of the Whiteshell were extreme (Alert Level-Red). Perhaps the greatest concern was focused on the Sandy River fire which had advanced to within 1/2 mile of the evacuated community of Manigotagan. The Swan/Pelican fire caused the evacuation of about 12 residents of the settlement of Briggs Spur. These people moved to Cowan. Plans to transfer Dauphin River Reserve evacuees from Gypsumville to Gimli were put on hold. Stringent travel restrictions were in effect in many areas and a number of provincial highways were closed due to fire and smoke conditions. At about 5:00 P.M. EMO dispatched the Emergency Mobile Command Centre (EMCC) to aid in establishing a

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.4 **May 13** (Continued)
command post and communications in the Dallas/Red Rose area. It arrived on-site at 8:00 P.M.

3.5 **May 14** - The fire situation remained serious although there was marginal improvement in the alert levels. Several areas were inundated with heavy smoke conditions, especially in the morning. The most serious threat was posed by the Swan/ Pelican fire which advanced to within two miles of Cowan and also threatened Camperville to the east. Ultimately Cowan had to be evacuated with all of the 80 residents leaving and going to Pine River, where 20 evacuees were housed in the Community Centre. In the Interlake, an improving situation in the south led the Reeve of the R.M. of Siglunes to terminate the state of local emergency at 12:40 p.m. EMO was advised by Chief David Traverse of the Lake St. Martin Reserve, that 200 women and children were being voluntarily evacuated to Ashern. Natural Resources' assessment at the time was that the Lake St. Martin Reserve wasn't under any imminent threat from fires. As the threat had subsided, the EMCC was returned to Winnipeg.

3.6 **May 15** - With no relief from the weather, the volatile fire situation in the Northwest and Northeast continued. The threat from the Swan/Pelican fire persisted on the community of Camperville and also became of concern in Duck Bay. Approximately 30 of the evacuees from Briggs Spur were moved to Swan River. The precarious situation in the Northwest necessitated emergency declarations in both the Local Government District of Mountain and the Rural Municipality of Minitonas. Since the appropriate municipal officials could not be located quickly enough in either instance, these declarations were made by the Honourable Albert Driedger, Minister responsible for the Emergency Measures Act, in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The Ashern, Moosehorn, Jackhead, Fisher River and St. David fires joined to form one large fire area in the Interlake. In the East the cottage area of Wanipigow had to be evacuated to Bissett. At the same time, however, there was concern that with unfavourable conditions a threat to Bissett could materialize.

3.7 **May 16** - The fire hazard continued to remain severe. In the Northwest the communities of Camperville and Duck Bay were inundated with heavy smoke from the Swan/Pelican fire. Some elderly and otherwise sensitive individuals were moved out of Camperville because of the health risk posed by the smoke levels. The huge fire in the Interlake, extending from Ashern to Jackhead mounted a new threat on the Fisher River Reserve. The 22 patients in the Personal Care Home had to be moved for a second time to the Deer Lodge Centre

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.7 **May 16** (Continued)
in Winnipeg. In addition 100 other residents congregated in the Community Hall and contingency plans were set to evacuate these people through Peguis to the Gimli facility. EMO dispatched a Municipal Advisor to Fisher River to meet with the Chief and Band Council to discuss evacuation plans. By the evening of the 16th evacuation plans for Fisher River were put on hold. A further 49 evacuees from the Lake St. Martin's Reserve were received at the Gimli facility. The Sandy River fire in the east continued to pose a threat to Bissett and contingency plans were formulated to evacuate to Lac du Bonnet in the event that the situation worsened.

3.8 **May 17** - The forest fire situation began to show some signs of improvement. Nevertheless, by this date the cumulative total of burned areas had exceeded 1.5 million hectares, thus rendering this the worst season since record keeping was initiated in 1930. While the situation with the Swan/Pelican fire improved marginally, the community of Camperville remained on evacuation standby. The EMO Municipal Advisor in the area travelled to Camperville on this day. Later on the 17th the evacuation order for Cowan was lifted, although residents who returned were to remain on one-hour alert status. The Interlake was beginning to stabilize. In the east Bissett also remained on evacuation standby. In total approximately 1500 residents remained evacuated from a number of communities across the province.

3.9 **May 18** - With varying amounts of rainfall throughout much of the fire area the situation continued to improve. The eight residents evacuated from Big Black River were permitted to return home.

3.10 **May 19** - The fire situation continued to improve. With further assistance from the weather significant progress was made on all three major fires. The Department of Natural Resources began releasing some of the aircraft which had been loaned by other jurisdictions. The states of emergency in both the Local Government District of Mountain and the Rural Municipality of Minitonas were terminated at 9:45 A.M. In the Interlake the 21 patients from the Fisher River Personal Care Home who had been evacuated to Deer Lodge were permitted to return. In the east the 900 evacuees were allowed to return to Manigotagan, Seymourville, Aghaming and Hollow Water Reserve.

3.11 **May 20** - This day witnessed further improvements in the overall fire situation. Alert levels in some regions were at the lowest level (green) and a majority of the fires were under control. The remainder of the evacuees from the Jackhead, Lake St. Martin's and

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.11 **May 20** (Continued)
Dauphin River Reserves returned to their homes. The fire emergency had subsided at this point at least for the time being.

4.0 **EMERGENCY COSTS**

Due to the second major episode of forest fires in July some of the costs from May could have been carried over. As much care as possible has gone into trying to separate the costs of the May fires.

Department/Agency	Incurred Costs
Emergency Measures Organization	8569.54
Natural Resources (Suppression Costs to June 14)	11122700.00
Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board	1500000.00
Northern Affairs	55311.90
Family Services (Emergency Social Services) (estimated)	89026.40
Health (Emergency Health Services)	40350.96
Government Services (Gimli Properties)	42048.00
Highways and Transportation (Transferred to Natural Resources)	
Labour (Office of the Fire Commissioner)	17735.61
R.C.M.P.	18745.72
Manitoba Telephone System	19597.79
Manitoba Agriculture	11500.00
Manitoba Hydro	**
TOTAL	$12,925,585.92

** At the time of preparing this report, no cost estimate had been received.

SECTION 2, JULY FIRES EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

1.0 GENERAL

The continuing drought conditions and dry lighting storms, from July 10th through to July 20th, 1989 contributed to the severe fire problems. Natural Resources' Fire Program advised EMO and on July 18, EMO alerted all Central Task Team (CTT) members and advised them to commence preparations as a fire emergency seemed imminent.

The forest fire emergency began with the materialization of a significant fire threat to the community of Cross Lake during the evening of Wednesday July 19, 1989. A full-scale evacuation of Cross Lake was carried out overnight. In the days that followed July 20-26, fires and smoke caused the full or partial evacuation of twenty-four communities.

In total approximately 23,000 evacuees were received and housed in fifteen reception communities. Twenty-four communities were affected of which fifteen communities were fully evacuated and significant numbers of people were relocated in the partial evacuation of the other nine. Re-entry operations, returning evacuees to their homes, began on July 27 and lasted until August 9. Evacuations were conducted utilizing various modes of transportation. Communities that could be, were evacuated by road using buses and private vehicles Some communities along the rail line to Churchill (Bayline) were evacuated by rail. Others were evacuated by boat. Some of the more isolated communities were evacuated by air. There was extensive military assistance with the air evacuations. Using a variety of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft the military logged 484.4 hours of flying time, a total of 152 flights moving 5808 evacuees, essential cargo and aiding Natural Resources with aerial Infra-red surveys.

By the time the danger had subsided, hundreds of fires destroyed a sizeable portion of northern Manitoba forests. A cumulative total of 1011 fires (season, to date) had been recorded by the second week of August. The area burned was estimated at 2.2 billion hectares. The fifty year average is 422 fires per year with an average area burned at 126,245 hectares. At the peak of activity the province was employing 2600 fire fighters, 68 helicopters, 12 CL-215 water bombers, 20 other fixed-wing aircraft and over 100 pieces of heavy equipment such as skidders and bulldozers. Resources in the form of personnel and equipment were brought in from across Canada and the United States.

The severity of the situation led to highway closures throughout the north. For several days all the highways east of Provincial Trunk

1.0 GENERAL (Continued)

Highway (PTH) 10 and north of Grand Rapids were closed. The only traffic permitted was emergency supply vehicles travelling in escorted convoys. Air traffic into the north was also significantly regulated.

The Central Task Team (CTT) met daily from July 20 to 31 inclusive to track developments and help coordinate the emergency response. In addition to the evacuees, thousands of people were involved in the provision of the response. Including fire suppression the total cost for the emergency will probably exceed $70-80 million Remarkably, with the exception of the millions of trees destroyed, damages were slight. Only 6 homes, 4 cottage, 2 lodges, 1 warehouse and a number of cabins and out-buildings were destroyed. One radio repeater site was also lost. In many respects this emergency was the most serious and complicated in Manitoba history. Despite having to move 23,000 people, in some very tense and stressful situations, no lives were lost and no serious injuries were reported.

2.0 PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

2.1 Executive Council/Ministers Responsible

Premier of Manitoba
Minister of Government Services, Responsible for the administration of The Emergency Measures Act.
Minister of Natural Resources
Minister of Northern Affairs
Minister of Community Services
Minister of Highways and Transportation
Minister of Health
Minister of Labour
Minister of Environment

2.2 Deputy Minister's Committee

Deputy Minister of Government Services
Deputy Minister of Natural Resources
Deputy Minister of Rural Development
A/ Deputy Minister of Health
A/Deputy Minister of Family Services.

2.3 PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENT/AGENCIES

2.3.1 Key Provincial Departments/Agencies

Manitoba Government Services
Emergency Measures Organization
Telecommunications
Purchasing
Material Supply
Property Management
Administration
Manitoba Natural Resources
    Regional Services - Fire Program
Manitoba Northern Affairs
    Local Government Services
Manitoba Family Services
    Emergency Social Services
    Community Social Services
    Income Security Division
Manitoba Highways and Transportation
    Air/Radio Division
    Marine Division
    Equipment Division
Manitoba Health
    Emergency Health Services
    Community Health Services
Manitoba Labour
    Office of the Fire Commissioner
Manitoba Environment
    Environmental Control Services

2.3.2 Support Provincial Departments/Agencies

Manitoba Hydro
Manitoba Telephone System
Manitoba Rural Development
Manitoba Information Services (Culture, Heritage & Recreation)
Manitoba Justice
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board

2.3.3 Federal Departments/Agencies

Emergency Preparedness Canada
Indian/Northern Affairs Canada
Health and Welfare Canada
    Medical Services Branch
National Defence, Canadian Forces

2.3.3 **Federal Departments/Agencies (Continued)**

Prairie Region Operations
Employment and Immigration Canada
Transport Canada
Supply and Services Canada

2.4 CENTRAL TASK TEAM (CTT)

The Central Task Team was comprised of:

EMO Co-ordinator
Staff representatives from:
- Manitoba Natural Resources
- Manitoba Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Government Services
- Manitoba Highways and Transportation
- Manitoba Health
- Manitoba Rural Development
- Manitoba Information Services
- Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Emergency Preparedness Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Health and Welfare Canada
- National Defence - Canadian Forces

The EMO Co-ordinator chaired the meeting of the CTT. Recommendations of the CTT were implemented by the appropriate departments/agencies.

2.5 PUBLIC AND MEDIA INFORMATION

Public and Media Information, with respect to provincial emergency operations, was directed by the Director of Communications, Manitoba Government Services.

2.6 RE-ENTRY TASK TEAM

The Re-Entry Task Team prepared and implemented a plan to facilitate the orderly and safe return of evacuees. Staff was comprised of representatives from:
- Manitoba Government Services
- Manitoba Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Natural Resources

SECTION 2, JULY FIRES EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

3.1 **July 19** - Conditions of above normal temperatures and increasing instability with a strong potential for lightning storms were in existence. By late afternoon EMO was made aware of two concern areas, one near the Cross Lake Community and the other near Wekusko Lake south of the town of Snow Lake. Into the evening the situation at Cross Lake worsened and after an alert period an evacuation was initiated between 22:00-23:00 hrs. local time. Early reports indicated that the entire population, approximately 4000 were enroute by road to Wabowden where preliminary reception arrangements were being made. EMO operated out of its Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) notifying Emergency Social Services (ESS), the Frontier School Division and the EMO Municipal Advisor who travelled from The Pas to Snow Lake.

Summary

Communities, Evacuation in Progress - Cross Lake.
Total Evacuees - 300-400.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 202.

3.2 **July 20** - This day witnessed a developing crisis of extremely critical proportions. With over 200 fires burning, fire indices recorded the highest ever readings. To a certain extent equipment shortages hampered suppression efforts and a search for assistance from other jurisdictions commenced. The protection of life and property were established as priorities. Additionally, travel restrictions were implemented in some areas.

By early morning the Cross Lake evacuation was essentially complete. A stay-behind group of between 100-200, including fire fighters, remained to protect the community. Cross Lake evacuees (about 3600) were moved from Wabowden to Thompson, The Pas, Flin Flon and Cranberry Portage. The threatening fire was approximately 1-2 km from Cross Lake and heavy smoke in the area proved to be a major problem. Later in the day road access to Cross Lake was blocked near Whiskey Jack Lake.

The Provincial Central Task Team (CTT) met at 11:00 hrs. to review the existing fire situation and departmental responsibilities. Major problem areas and the potential for additional communities being threatened were discussed.

An Emergency Operations Group convened a meeting in Thompson. The group was comprised of community, civic and provincial government representatives who met to discuss developments in Thompson which was a prime reception community and a collection and staging point for evacuations out of, and supplies into, the main fire region

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.2 **July 20** (Continued)

The Thompson group undertook two very important tasks; first they were particularly interested in the many facets of the provision of emergency social services for the burgeoning numbers of evacuees arriving in, or being transported through Thompson; and secondly, they discussed procedures to be followed for the tracking of emergency costs. The meeting was chaired by the Thompson City Manager. As of 13:00 hrs. there were 1144 registered evacuees in Thompson.

The final significant development on July 20 was the forecast in the afternoon fire-briefing for a potential of very serious problems in Snow Lake.

Summary

Communities Evacuated - Cross Lake.
Communities on Alert/Threatened - Snow Lake.
Total Evacuees - 3,500 - 4,000.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 239.

3.3 **July 21** - Extreme alert levels were in existence throughout northern Manitoba. Over 225 fires were burning throughout the regions and with hot, dry weather forecast along with increasing winds potential problems were anticipated in the communities of Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage, Oxford House, Sherridon and Snow Lake. In many areas smoke was very thick and the resultant visibility problems were a serious concern.

EMO's northern Municipal Advisor remained situated in Thompson and the western region Municipal Advisor was sent to aid with evacuee reception and air transport coordination efforts in Flin Flon. By 14:00 hrs. the City of Thompson had received 1543 registered evacuees. Other evacuees were accommodated in Cranberry Portage, The Pas, Wabowden, and Flin Flon. Public inquiry lines were established in these communities. In addition, informational check points were established at key locations on major northern highways.

As the situation worsened the Air Division of Manitoba Highways and Transportation was activated and began to arrange for air carriers to assist in evacuations and re-supply in the north. Of initial interest were air evacuations necessitated by patients with medical problems, exacerbated by heavy smoke conditions from the communities of Oxford House, Norway House, God's Lake Narrows, South Indian Lake and St. Theresa Point. Many of the medi-vacs were taken to Winnipeg via Thompson. In anticipation of an expanded requirement for air resources the Canadian Forces were contacted and asked to assist. By evening military aircraft were in use.

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.3 **July 21** (Continued)
By mid-afternoon most major highways in the north were closed. These included PTH 6 north of Grand Rapids, PTH 39 between PTH 10 and PTH 6 and also PR 391 between Thompson and Leaf Rapids.

During the afternoon the communities of Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei were evacuated by rail. Later, after an alert period which saw seriously worsening conditions the evacuation of Snow Lake began. At 17:45 hrs. the Mayor of Snow Lake declared a state of Local Emergency in order to further facilitate evacuation efforts. A number of Manitoba Natural Resources helicopters were temporarily taken off suppression duties to aid in the evacuation of Snow Lake. By day's end the total number of evacuees from the north had exceeded 5700 including several hundred taken from Snow Lake.

Summary

Communities Evacuated - Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage and Sherridon.
Community Evacuation in Progress - Snow Lake, Oxford House, Norway House, God's Lake Narrows, South Indian Lake and St. Theresa Point.
Total Evacuees - Approximately 6100.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 241.

3.4 **July 22** - Weather conditions had not improved and continued to contribute to a worsening situation. Air evacuation and assessment efforts were still hampered by smoke. Particularly extreme smoke conditions were experienced in Thompson. All of the previous highway closures remained in effect. There was also growing concern arising about telephone and hydro micro-wave towers in threatened areas of the north. Communications difficulties began to be encountered in some regions, for example phone service to Granville Lake was out for a time. There was a marked increase in Department of National Defence involvement and assistance.

The air evacuation of Oxford House was suspended at about 08:20 hrs. after close to 400 evacuees had been brought out as aircraft scheduled had to be diverted to higher priority tasking. The evacuation of Snow Lake was completed during the morning and between 1400-1500 residents had left the community.

Another situation arose with a fire flaring up near Leaf Rapids. This caused the community to be placed on an evacuation alert. The subsequent evacuation of Leaf Rapids began about noon and the Mayor declared a State of Local Emergency at approximately 13:45 hrs. The evacuation of 1200 Leaf Rapids residents who moved to Lynn Lake was completed by 16:20 hrs.

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.4 **July 22** (Continued)

The community of Grand Rapids was also placed on evacuation alert because of an approaching fire. Furthermore, because of smoke levels, evacuation of residents in medical distress from the communities of Pukatawagan and York Landing were commenced along with the resumption of evacuation from Oxford House. Newly threatened communities included: Split Lake, Norway House, Shamattawa and Gillam. Later in the day evacuations were commenced from all of these communities. The Norway House evacuation was staged through Thompson. To aid in the possible full evacuation of Gillam, VIA Rail dispatched a train from Churchill to Gillam. By day's end, over 14,000 people had been evacuated from their home communities.

The CTT met to review the situation and discussed various contingencies to deal with the build-up of evacuees in some communities, specifically Thompson. Another prime source of concern were the manifestations of transportation difficulties which were beginning to appear.

Summary

Communities Evacuated - Leaf Rapids.
Community Evacuation in Progress - Split Lake, Norway House, Pukatawagan, Shamattawa, York Landing, Oxford House and Gillam.
Communities on Alert/Threatened - Grand Rapids.
Total Evacuees - approximately 14,000.
Total Number of Fires Burning - approximately 250.

3.5 **July 23** - In most of the northern fire zone warm dry conditions continued and heavy smoke conditions persisted. Highway closures and other travel restrictions also remained in effect. As a result provisions in the north, especially Thompson, began to run low. To remedy this problem arrangements were made for escorted convoys of fuel and food (essential items only) to be marshalled in The Pas and taken to Thompson.

The first supply convoy was planned for departure about midnight. Many hundreds of evacuees from several communities continued to arrive in Thompson. Arrivals were by both air and ground transportation. Along with the scheduled military flights, utilizing C-130 Hercules transports, Canadian Airlines International provided 737 aircraft to augment the Thompson to Winnipeg shuttle process. As of 12:30 hrs., Thompson was caring for 3410 registered evacuees; many more had staged through Thompson on the shuttles to the south. The CTT met in the morning to review the fire situation and evacuee handling and housing.

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.5 **July 23** (Continued)
The day had begun with additional evacuees driving to Thompson from Split Lake. The Norway House evacuation of approximately 4000 residents, which had begun on the 22nd, was completed. There were reports of some homes destroyed in the community. Fire and smoke continued to threaten many communities. Evacuation of individuals particularly sensitive to the heavy smoke conditions was carried out from Nelson House, Shamattawa, God's River and St. Theresa Point. The community of Ilford was evacuated by rail to Gillam and subsequently a train load of evacuees (239) was taken from Gillam to Churchill. A second train was stationed in Gillam prepared to assist in a full-scale evacuation if the threat to the community continued to mount. Later in the day the full-scale evacuations of Nelson House, Pukatawagan and Grand Rapids were commenced. Due to adverse flying conditions the evacuation of Pukatawagan was not completed.

Staff fatigue began to become obvious in many of the operations. Several days of extremely intensive activity was beginning to take a toll. The Government of Canada, through EPC, began supplying personnel trained in emergency management from a number of federal departments to assist EMO in the provincial Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). The provincial departments of Natural Resources and Rural Development provided back-up Municipal Advisors to assist EMO field staff in Thompson.

Throughout the day the emergency escalated and by evening the total number of evacuees had exceeded 18,000. As a result at 20:30 hrs., the Honourable Albert Driedger, Minister Responsible for the Emergency Measures Act, declared a State of Emergency for the province of Manitoba (See Appendix "A")

Summary

Communities Evacuated - Split Lake, Ilford, Norway House, Nelson House and Grand Rapids.
Community Evacuations in Progress - Gillam, Shamattawa, God's River, St. Theresa and Pukatawagan.
Total Evacuees - over 18,000.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 241.

3.6 **July 24**. On this date cooler temperatures were experienced in parts of the north. There were, however, continuing visibility problems resulting from the heavy smoke which was very severe in some communities. These smoke conditions hampered evacuation efforts by temporarily denying air access to some of the threatened communities such as God's River and Pukatawagan. In addition, the

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.6 July 24 (Continued)

Thompson airport was closed for a time because of the reduced visibilities in smoke. To address the problem the Department of National Defence provided a portable Quad-radar set to aid in air traffic control and thus increase the utility of Thompson airport. In conjunction with their steadily increasing involvement, DND also provided liaison officers to the provincial EOC.

Throughout much of the north, highway closures and extensive travel restrictions remained in effect. Additional escorted highway truck convoys of essential goods were organized from The Pas to Thompson. The maintenance of these supply lines was a critically important consideration. Reports indicated the destruction of the CN bridge at Mile 222 as a result of the fires. This effectively interdicted the Bayline rail route and led to the re-supply of Churchill using military C-130 Hercules aircraft. Due to the fact that many communities had been evacuated or were being evacuated all non-emergency flights throughout the north were restricted by a Notice To Airmen (NOTAM) issued by Transport Canada.

The evacuation of Pukatawagan and York Landing were completed on the 24th. Medically related evacuations necessitated by the heavy smoke were continued from Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack, God's River, God's Lake Narrows, Shamattawa and Oxford House. As of 17:00 hrs. there were 4047 registered evacuees in Thompson. EPC assisted in obtaining additional evacuee registration cards from Health and Welfare Canada in Ottawa.

Additional doctors and nurses were flown to Thompson to aid in the provision of emergency health services. Also, in Thompson, additional RCMP support was provided. As the emotional health of evacuees was a prime concern, the Department of Health sought assistance from Alberta Public Safety Services who dispatched a Critical Incident Stress Team from Edmonton. Provincial fire-fighting resources were totally committed and additional resources were being acquired from other jurisdictions.

During the afternoon, the Premier, the Minister Responsible for the Emergency Measures Act, the Minister of Northern Affairs and The Minister of Natural Resources flew to Thompson and among other activities attended a 17:00 meeting of the Thompson Emergency Operating Group.

Finally, at the CTT meeting of July 24, two important recommendations were put forth. First, it was suggested that the

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.6 **July 24** (Continued)
Deputy Ministers Committee be established in accordance with the provisions in the Manitoba Emergency Plan. The committee, comprised of Deputy Ministers (or their delegates) from key departments, was established to advise and make recommendations to the Minister with respect to the provincial and municipal emergency response.

The second recommendation was to establish a Re-entry Task Team to begin the planning and preparations for the return of the thousands of evacuees to their homes, once it was deemed safe.

Summary

Communities Evacuated - Pukatawagan and York Landing.
Community Evacuations in Progress - Red Sucker Lake, St. Theresa Point, Garden Hill, Wasagamack, God's River, God's Lake Narrows, Shamattawa and Oxford House.
Total Evacuees - approximately 19,000.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 250.

3.7 **July 25** - Despite the fact the fire hazard remained at extreme levels, this day may have been the turning point. Many of the fires threatening communities had stabilized or even improved marginally. Light rain fell in many areas varying anywhere from trace levels to 8 mm depending on the location. The area around Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids received significant precipitation. Nevertheless, heavy smoke conditions continued to persist in many northern communities. In Thompson, thick smoke and an early morning inversion caused INCO operations to be shut down at 06:30 hrs. Smoke and fire conditions continued to necessitate the closure of all highways, restricting traffic out of Thompson to emergency vehicles only.

One food convoy, consisting of approximately fifteen semi-trailer trucks, arrived in Thompson and another including supplies of aviation fuel left Winnipeg at 18:00 hrs. During the day there was also the military airlift of medical supplies to both Thompson and Churchill. The Churchill flight also included food and other essential items

Smoke related medical evacuations were continued from Shamattawa, St. Theresa Point, Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill, Wasagamack, Gillam, God's Lake Narrows, God's River and Oxford House. In addition more people who had been evacuated previously were shuttled out of Thompson to Winnipeg in an attempt to lighten the burden on that northern community. At 13:45 hrs. all smoke related evacuations were placed "on hold" pending an overall assessment of

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.7 **July 25** (Continued)
the situation. A resumption of the evacuation of Oxford House took place later in the evening.

Also, eight members of the Alberta Critical Incident Stress De-briefing Team arrived in Winnipeg.

Summary

Community Evacuations in Progress - Shamattawa, Gillam, St. Theresa Point, Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill, Wasagamack, God's Lake Narrows, God's River and Oxford House.
Total Evacuees - 20,849.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 226.

3.8 **July 26** - On this day there was more relief from the weather as precipitation occurred in portions of the fire area. As a result there was a general improvement in the overall situation. Increasingly, fires were being brought under control or being held. Intensified suppression efforts, supplemented with additional equipment acquired from other jurisdictions contributed to the gains. Nevertheless, as of July 26, with slightly over 1.2 million hectares burned, this became the worst year on record (previous maximum was 1961, 1.1 million hectares).

Despite the improving conditions, heavy smoke was still a serious problem in some locales. During the morning and afternoon more smoke/medical evacuations were conducted from Oxford House, God's Lake Narrows, Garden Hill and Wasagamack. However, as the situation was improving and no communities were threatened by fires, all evacuations were suspended at 19:40 hrs. pending a further situation assessment on July 27th.

Throughout the north, travel restrictions in the form of highway closures and NOTAMS (Notice of Airmen), regulating air traffic to evacuated communities, remained in effect. Two convoys escorted by the RCMP and the Department of Highways and Transportation were brought out of the north. A total of 63 vehicles left Lynn Lake and were joined by 21 from Gillam/Sundance and 165 vehicles from Thompson for the trek south. The convoy was organized to enable people (tourists etc.) stranded by travel restrictions to drive out to southern Manitoba. This was not an evacuation, but an opportunity for people, mostly non-residents, to travel out of northern Manitoba. Those joining the convoy did so at their own expense (food, fuel, etc.) and were not allowed to leave the convoy. An aerial surveillance confirmed the safety of highway travel prior to the convoys departure. Another escorted supply convoy left The Pas at 18:00 hrs. destined for Thompson.

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.8 **July 26** (Continued)

Summary

Community Evacuations in Progress - Oxford House, God's Lake Narrows, Garden Hill and Wasagamack.
Total Evacuees - approximately 23,000.
Total Number of Fires Burning - 227.

3.9 **July 27** - This turned out to be another good day. Progress was made in controlling fires including actioning fires outside areas of direct threat to communities. Clear sky was reported in most communities with no serious smoke conditions reported. The only exception was Oxford House which was still experiencing difficulties.

As conditions improved some of the highways in the north were re-opened. The section of PTH 6 between Thompson and Ponton was opened along with PR 373 from PTH 6 to Cross Lake. Controls on air traffic into evacuated communities were maintained. Scheduled service to Gillam was resumed with the proviso that passengers could enplane but not deplane in that community. Escorted convoys north and south were also formed and moved as on previous days.

There were no further evacuations on the 27th. The return of Cross Lake evacuees in Thompson was authorized to commence at 08:00 hrs. Communities had to meet the provisions of a comprehensive checklist before such re-entry was authorized. Full authorization procedures were established to ensure that re-entry would be both appropriate and justified.

Other significant activities included the deployment of part of the Alberta Trauma Team to Thompson; repairs to the CN Bridge at Mile 22 were begun and DND deployed helicopters to The Pas, Grand Rapids, and Thompson in preparation for Infra-red (IR) scan tasking and fire mapping. The U.S. Forest Service also provided an aircraft and staff for high level IR scanning of some of the fire hot-spots.

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Cross Lake.
Evacuees Returning - 3,500.
Numbers of Fires Burning - 236.

3.10 **July 28** - Favourable conditions led to further progress in fire suppression but there was still a need for additional resources in the form of personnel and equipment. Natural Resources utilized 'satellite imagery (courtesy of Environment Canada's Atmospheric

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.10 **July 28** (Continued)
Environment Service) to assist in fire mapping. In addition another high-level IR scanning aircraft and crew were procured from a private sector source in Ottawa. Lower altitude IR scanning was also performed using military helicopters to carry operators with hand-held units.

Smoky conditions recurred or persisted in several communities. As a result, an assessment team was assembled to visit northern communities to monitor and detail the nature and severity of smoke inundation. The team was comprised of three members, one each from Environment (provincial), Medical Services and Indian Affairs (federal). The first community they travelled to was Oxford House.

On this day, approximately 30 more medi-vacs were brought out of Garden Hill and Red Sucker Lake. The community of Grand Rapids was authorized for re-entry and the 1,000 evacuees who had been in Winnipeg returned.

Travel restrictions were eased somewhat as the section of PTH 6 between Ponton and Grand Rapids was re-opened after 13:00 hrs. Escorted convoys, however, were continued north and south between Ponton and The Pas as that section of highway remained closed.

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Grand Rapids.
Evacuees Returning - 1,000.
Number of Fires Burning - 245.

3.11 **July 29** - More progress in fire suppression activities was enjoyed, however, the situation remained serious. There was still heavy smoke conditions experienced in some areas with significant clearing in others. The smoke assessment team reported from Oxford House that air quality was good and that there was no immediate health risk. The team returned to Thompson and met with officials there to develop an assessment action plan.

Some highway closures remained in effect although PTH 6 stayed open to traffic. During the day PTH 39 was opened between Ponton and PTH 10. However, access to Snow Lake remained restricted.

The re-entry of Norway House was authorized contingent on the arrival of an advance party of essential personnel (approximately 240 individuals). Repairs to the CN Rail bridge at Mile 222 of the Bayline were completed.

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.11 **July 29** (Continued)

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Norway House.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 5,000.
Number of Fires Burning - 241.

3.12 **July 30** - Favourable weather consisting of lower temperatures, light winds and higher relative humidities aided in fire suppression and led to more progress. The overall situation was classed as stable and improving. However, incidents of increased smoke levels were still experienced in some locales. Smoke assessments were conducted in the communities of Split Lake, York Landing and Ilford.

The full scale re-entry of Norway House was continued. In addition the communities of Leaf Rapids, Snow Lake and Gillam were authorized for re-entry to begin. Furthermore, an advance part of twenty-seven individuals was flown into Oxford House in preparation for re-entry authorization.

PR 280 was opened from Thompson to Gillam with access to Split Lake restricted until re-entry was authorized to that community.

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Leaf Rapids, Snow Lake and Gillam.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 14,200.
Number of Fires Burning - 222.

3.13 **July 31** - The fire situation continued to improve and smoke cleared from many communities. Smoke assessments were conducted in Shamattawa, God's River and God's Lake Narrows. All highways were opened with the exception of PR 391 between Thompson and Leaf Rapids including access to Nelson House. Escorted convoys were run north and south between Leaf Rapids and Thompson. Regular train service resumed except to evacuated communities.

MTS' Cyril River tower site was threatened by fire during the day. Destruction of the site could result in problems for both MTS and Manitoba Hydro. Manitoba Natural Resources deployed a heli-tac team which successfully protected the site.

The communities of Split Lake, Thicket Portage, Oxford House, Ilford, York Landing, South Indian Lake and Sherridon were all authorized for re-entry and the return of evacuees to these communities was begun. Manitoba Health prepared guidelines for

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.13 **July 31** (Continued)
persons returning to communities at risk of periodic heavy smoke episodes. The guidelines outlined actions to be taken to minimize affects from intermittent smoke exposure.

The Quad-radar unit belonging to DND was removed from Thompson on the 31st. On this day the CTT also convened their last daily meeting as it was evident that the emergency was winding down.

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Split Lake, Thicket Portage, Oxford House, Ilford, York Landing, South Indian Lake and Sherridon.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - approximately 15,000.
Number of Fires Burning - 211.

3.14 **August 1** - This day witnessed continued slow progress in fire suppression and generally improving conditions. Smoke assessments were performed in the communities of St. Theresa Point, Wasagamach and Garden Hill. The communities of York Landing, Shamattawa and God's Lake Narrows were authorized for re-entry to commence.

Operations began to wind down as the RCMP "D" Division EOC discontinued operations as did the Emergency Operations Centre in Churchill (Churchill was cleared of all evacuees). The Thompson EOC also began phasing down and the last daily meeting of the Thompson Operating Group was held.

The highway between Thompson and Leaf Rapids remained closed and escorted convoys were arranged again in both directions. Some other sections of highway were closed temporarily due to hazardous smoke and fire conditions.

Summary

Communities, Re-entry Authorized - York Landing, Shamattawa, God's Lake Narrows.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 15,660.
Number of Fires Burning - 209.

3.15 **August 2** - Weather had deteriorated somewhat and above normal temperatures created some fire suppression difficulties. Occasional smoke periods continued to be problematic in northern communities. Suppression equipment from other jurisdictions began to be recalled because of fire problems elsewhere.

3.0 **SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS** (Continued)

3.15 **August 2** (Continued)
A smoke assessment was conducted in Red Sucker Lake. The communities of God's River, Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point and Wasagamack were all authorized for re-entry and flights with returning evacuees began.

The section of PR 391 between Thompson and Leaf Rapids remained as the only road closure. Plans for convoys between these two communities were temporarily placed on hold.

Summary
Communities, Re-entry Authorized - God's River, Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point and Waasagomach.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 17,430.
Number of Fires Burning - 215.

3.16 **August 3** - Some precipitation contributed to continued slow progress in gaining the upper hand on the fires. Some smoke problems were still being noted.

Re-entry authorization was given to Red Sucker Lake and evacuees continued to return to the Island Lake communities. An advance party was flown into Pukatawagan prior to re-entry clearance being issued.

Convoys between Thompson and Leaf Rapids along the closed section of PR 391 were resumed. Federal personnel assisting in the provincial EOC were released.

Summary
Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Red Sucker Lake.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 17,500.
Number of Fires Burning - 207.

3.17 **August 4** - Good rainfall amounts were received throughout most of the northern problem fire areas. As a result the overall fire situation improved dramatically. A smoke assessment was conducted in the community of South Indian Lake. The communities of Pikwitonei, Pukatawagan and Herb Lake/Wekusko were authorized for re-entry.

At 12:00 hrs. on August 4, the Honourable Albert Driedger, terminated the province-wide state of emergency.

Recognizing that there were millions of dollars in costs, a Finance Committee was formed and met on this day. The committee was chaired

3.0 SEQUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (Continued)

3.17 **August 4** (Continued)
by the Director of Finance for Manitoba Government Services and was comprised of finance officers of the significantly involved departments. The mandate of the committee was to establish the financial impact of the fire emergency and develop mechanisms for reimbursing departments and municipalities which had undertaken substantial expenditures. The committee met only once.

Summary
Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Pikwitonei, Pukatawagan and Herb Lake/Wekusko
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 20,500.
Number of Fires Burning - approximately 190.

3.18 **August 5** - Continued improving conditions contributed to the authorized re-entry of the community of Nelson House. This was the last of the evacuated communities to be cleared for re-entry. With the vast bulk of the return airlifts complete, military assistance was discontinued.

Summary
Communities, Re-entry Authorized - Nelson House.
Total Evacuees Cleared for Return - 23,000 (all evacuees).
Number of Fires Burning - approximately 190.

3.19 **August 6 - August 9** - Over the course of a few days there were re-entry flights by private carriers into several of the communities which had been evacuated. By August 9, all returns were essentially completed.

4.0 OPERATION COSTS :

Department/Agency	Approp. Number	As at Jan 31,90	Forecast Balance
Natural Resources, Fire Program	18-1A	331324.87	
Highways and Transportation	18-1C	46549.78	
Disaster Assistance Board	18-1D	1273342.70	450000.00
Family Services	18-1F	4594612.87	
Northern Affairs	18-1G	1057508.93	
Emergency Measures Organization	18-1H	2611283.08	1364635.02
Government Services	18-1H	767.37	
Labour, Fire Commissioner	18-1H	6026.59	
Environment	18-1H	203.90	
Rural Development	18-1H	2732.80	
Culture Heritage and Recreation	18-1H	12292.26	

4.0 OPERATION COSTS (Continued):

Department/Agency	Approp. Number	As at Jan 31,90	Forecast Balance
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	18-1H		236828.04
Health	18-1J	15605.49	
Emergency Health Services	18-1[illegible]		719103.43
Manitoba Hydro		352913.00	
Manitoba Telephone System			450000.00
Totals		10305163.64	3220566.49

TOTAL EVACUATION COST $13,525,730.13

TOTAL FIRE FIGHTING COST :

Natural Resources, Fire Program $55,154,000.00

TOTAL OPERATIONS COST (Estimate)' $68,679,730.13

Manitoba

Minister of
Government Services

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
R3C 0V8

DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

IN THE

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba is encountering Forest Fire conditions that require prompt action to prevent harm or damage to the safety, health and welfare of persons in the Province of Manitoba and to prevent damage to property or the environment within the Province of Manitoba;

THEREFORE pursuant to Section 10 (1) of The Emergency Measures Act, being Cap. E80 of the Continuing Consolidation of the Statutes of Manitoba, I, Albert Driedger, Minister responsible for the administration of The Emergency measures Act declare that a state of emergency exists in the Province of Manitoba from July 23, 1989; 8:30 p.m. to August 5, 1989.

DATED this 23 day of July, 1989.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Honourable Albert Driedger, Minister

PURSUANT to Section 15 (2) of The Emergency Measures Act, I, Albert Driedger, Minister responsible for the administration of the Emergency Measures Act, declare that this Declaration of a State of Emergency is terminated as of 12:00 p.m. this 4th day of August, 1989.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Honourable Albert Driedger, Minister

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)

5.1.1 **Communications/Information Flow.**-.One of the major difficulties during this emergency was information transmittal and communications problems. Interdepartmental and interagency communications and coordination need to be enhanced. Likewise, information flow from the provincial EOC to regional site operations staff and affected communities requires improvement.

5.1.1.a **Recommendation** - That provincial government departments and agencies, especially those with primary response roles complete departmental emergency plans as soon as possible. Information and procedures outlined in the plans will alleviate interdepartmental communication and coordination problems.

Response - Departments report progress on Emergency Plans as follows:

Highways and Transportation - Printed copies available within one week;
Emergency Social Services - Review of draft plan in progress;
Rural Development - First draft plan in approximately six (6) months;
Government Services - Plan updating in progress;
Emergency Health Services - In progress;
Office of the Fire Commissioner - final draft plan is workable. Will be part of Manitoba Labour Emergency Plan;
Northern Affairs - Final review of plan is in progress; and
Natural Resources - Fire component portion of departmental plan is in place. Overall plan is in progress.

5.1.1.b **Recommendation** - That EMO develop its own written EOC procedures dealing with the dissemination of vital response information to regional staff and also affected communities.

Response - Operational procedures will be developed specific to communications as part of the review of the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

5.1.2 **Evacuee Registration** - There has been an ongoing problem of accurately recording the number of evacuees leaving a community, the number arriving at a reception community/facility, and keeping track of them in-between. This has proved particularly problematic in situations where evacuations are by road and many of the evacuees provide their own transportation.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 **EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)** (Continued)

5.1.2 **Evacuee Registration** (Continued)

Recommendation.-.That EMO work with communities to improve evacuation/ reception/re-entry procedures and promote the establishment of same in the community emergency plans. The Red Cross (through ESS) will provide on-site registration and recording of evacuees if requested through EMO. Further, that ESS in conjunction with the Red Cross and EMO review registration procedures.

Response - The Manitoba Division of Canadian Red Cross will co-ordinate registration and inquiry for evacuations. The necessary infrastructure and forms inventory is now in place.

Red Cross is in process of developing a centralized information management system which should be in place by spring of 1990.

5.1.3 **Forest Fire Causes** - It has been noted by Natural Resources that over 90% of forest fire starts were human caused.

Recommendation - In light of the causes of the spring fires, there is requirement for a review of existing legislation for the prevention of fire starts, and the policy for fire burning permits.

Response - A Fire Prevention Committee has been established under the auspices of EMO. Public Information announcements have been shown on television. Natural Resources is producing other supporting materials for distribution. The committee will meet again in June, 1990 to determine the effectiveness of the program.

Provincial control of Burn Permits is required as there is no continuity in the control of permits by Local Authorities. Permits for burning of peat moss are required. Natural Resources has actioned peat fires, whether the cost will be recovered from the offending farmers is a Ministerial decision.

Manitoba Agriculture and Manitoba Environment have a Stubble Burning education program in place.

5.1.4 **Notification of Municipalities** - In the past, Natural Resources, Rural Development and EMO have conducted joint meetings with municipal officials concerning the potential for flood. This provided local government officials the opportunity to review their responsibilities for a flood.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 **EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)** (Continued)

5.1.4 **Notification of Municipalities**(Continued)

Recommendation - It may be prudent to schedule meetings of this nature for communities that are in wooded areas when potential for a forest fire is predicted.

Response - To be actioned by EMO, Rural Development, Northern Affairs and Natural Resources. Manitoba Northern Affairs is in process of setting up meetings for each Northern Affairs Community.

5.1.5 **Training of Municipal and Indian Reserve Officials**.-.It was noted in this emergency that some local government officials and emergency response personnel were unaware of procedures (i.e. lines of authority) and responsibilities.

Recommendation - There is requirement for more training and education to municipal and Native Communities officials on their respective responsibilities in an [forest fire] emergency. (Seminars conducted for native communities should be done in consultation with the Federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Response - Training Courses for Native and Municipal Officials are an ongoing EMO activity. EMO will be conducting four (4) Planning and Operations Peace Courses in Manitoba, with the assistance of staff from the Emergency Preparedness Canada College in Arnprior.

EMO and Northern Affairs are working on courses for Northern Affairs Communities. EMO will provide training courses in conjunction with other departments provided these departments are prepared to assist in the provision of personnel and financial resources.

5.1.6 **Secondment of Advisors** - Emergency Measures Organization Municipal Advisors were very busy in the field assisting local authorities in co-ordinating emergency response. However, due to the many forest fires threatening communities, not all communities were covered.

Recommendation - EMO has identified the need for additional personnel to be trained as Emergency Municipal Advisors. This could be done with the secondment of personnel from other departments.

Response - Actioned. Initial training of twenty (20) departmental personnel completed

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 **EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)** (Continued)

5.1.7 **Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)** - Due to the fact that emergencies, such as this one, can occur and escalate with incredible rapidity it is no longer practical to consider commencing operations at the EMO Emergency Coordination Centre and then as the situation develops move to the EOC in the Legislative Building.

Recommendation - That the response concept be modified so that the two facilities, the ECC and EOC, be consolidated into one provincial EOC. Further, that this expanded facility be incorporated into the EMO offices and that upon development of this EOC the space in the Legislative Building no longer will be designated as an EOC. These changes should be reflected in appropriate amendments to the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

Response - A new Emergency Operations Centre has bveen constructed adjacent to EMO offices located on the 15th Floor, 405 Broadway.

5.1.8 **Provincial EOC Procedures**

Recommendation - That a manual of standard operating procedures for the provincial EOC be developed to facilitate the smooth conduct of a coordinated provincial response. Of particular importance are procedures for communications and information flow.

Response - Standard Operating Procedures for the new EOC and Communications are being developed by EMO for inclusion in the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

5.1.9 **Coordination of Transportation Resources** - In this emergency, involving the movement of 23,000 evacuees, transportation was a key area for coordination. It is critically important to establish a "Transport Desk" in the EOC and have it established as early as possible. It is suggested that an established "desk" could keep closer track of air movements including records of cargo flights as well as evacuation flights.

Recommendation - That Manitoba Highways and Transportation appoint additional staff to support the existing emergency preparedness officer. Further, that representatives of the Air Division be specified as participants in emergency preparedness activities including CTT meetings as may be required, depending on the nature of the emergency.

Response - Manitoba Highways and Transportaion have fully implemented this recommendation. Additional appointments, including Air Division representatives have been made to the department's response organization.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 **EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)** (Continued)

5.1.10 **Legal Services Representative on the Inter-departmental Emergency Preparedness Committee/Central Task Team** - Once a general state of emergency had been declared on July 23 and during the duration of the declaration a number of questions arose regarding the interpretation and application of emergency powers, Section 12 of the Emergency Measures Act.

Recommendation - That Crown Council be appointed by the Deputy Attorney General to sit on the Interdepartmental Emergency Preparedness Committee and the CTT as required to provide legal advice and address queries on applicable emergencies legislation that may arise.

Response - To be actioned by EMO.

5.11 **Establishment of an Emergencies Finance Committee** - This emergency resulted in the expenditure of large sums of money. It is important for departments to closely track, evaluate, authorize and collate their expenditures. Likewise it is important to develop estimates of total emergency costs as quickly as possible either during or immediately after an emergency. Furthermore re-imbursement procedures to cover recoveries for provincial government departments and municipalities should be developed and refined.

Recommendation - That an Emergencies Finance Committee, chaired by Manitoba Government Services' Director of Finance, be established. Further that each Department designate a financial officer to sit on this committee. The establishment and mandate of the committee should be reflected in an appropriate amendment to the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

Response - To be actioned by EMO.

5.1.12 **EOC Staffing** - There was need for personnel from other departments to handle problems and queries from the affected communities in the Emergency Operations Centre or Emergency Coordination Centre.

Recommendation - The staffing of the EMO Emergency Coordination Centre (or Provincial Emergency Operations Centre) should include representatives from the key departments in accordance with the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

Response - Affected departments have agreed.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

5.2.1 **Fire Suppression Review** - Internal, external and an independent review is recommended to ascertain and improve the Province's forest fire suppression capabilities. These reviews should be conducted throughout the upcoming months and reported to the Government for consideration and/or implementation.

Response - Actioned by Natural Resources

5.2.2 **Natural Resources/Office of the Fire Commissioner Communications** - It was evident in this emergency that staff from Manitoba Natural Resources and the Office of the Fire Commissioner were unaware of each other's capabilities. In some areas FCO staff coordinated evacuations, and through the Mutual Aid Program, they obtained and directed fire fighting personnel and equipment to protect property.

5.2.2.a **Recommendation** - That the Fire Commissioner's field staff meet with Fire Program staff and members of the Provincial Fire Teams to ascertain each others capabilities, lines of authority and responsibilities. Furthermore, that EMO establish an Emergency Communications Committee to determine the feasibility of the installation of a province wide inter-agency radio frequency in local fire trucks RCMP and Natural Resources vehicles. This would ensure coordination and flow of information at the emergency site.

Response - An Emergency Communications Committee, chaired by the Director of EMO, has reviewed the communications difficulty. On the recommendation of the committee a province wide Command and Control Radio Frequency (158.550 Mhz) has been established by Communications Canada. Operational Instructions for Inter-Agency Emergency Communications have been forwarded to all municipalities, the Fire Commissioner, Emergency Health Services, Natural Resources and EMO.

5.2.2.b **Recommendation** - That when a grass, forest or bush fire is threatening a community or property, the local Mutual Aid District will be involved in the provision of fire protection equipment.

Response - The Fire College and Office of the Fire Commissioner have formulated an equipment policy for the provision of fire protection equipment.

5.2.2.c **Recommendation** - That a Fire Command System be developed and implemented using and involving Fire Commissioner's staff, Mutual Aid Districts, RCMP, other Government Agencies, Local Governments and Manitoba Natural Resources staff. The Fire Command System, in essence, delineates responsibilities to participating agencies before and during a forest fire. The U.S. Forest Service Incident Command System could be copied and used in Manitoba.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2 NATURAL RESOURCES (Continued)

5.2.2.c **Communications** (Continued)

Response - Natural Resources fire suppression personnel are directly involved in Incident Command. Other agencies would be involved in communications and information flow.

5.2.2.d **Recommendation** - That Manitoba Natural Resources enter into formal agreements that specify the responsibilities of the various agencies involved in fire suppression activities.

Response - Manitoba Natural Resources will be contacting local authorities in wooded districts and adjoining municipalities to develop fire suppression agreements.

5.3 NORTHERN AFFAIRS

5.3.1 **Re-entry Guidelines**.-.Greater authority should be provided to the Re-Entry Committee if one is established in the north. It does not seem reasonable to develop re-entry plans to be sent south for approval. Perhaps EMO local staff could have delegated authority with Winnipeg staff acting as a support mechanism.

Response - EMO will assist local authorities in the revision and/or expansion of Re-Entry Guidelines in local emergency plans. Final authority on re-entry must remain with the Director of EMO to ensure essential services are in place for the safety of returning persons.

5.4 EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

5.4.1 **Interdepartmental Communications** - A significant response to a major emergency involving several departments requires departmental participation in the coordination activities of the EOC.

Recommendation - That an EHS representative should be present in the EMO Emergency Operations Centre, thus ensuring speedy, accurate, complete and efficient information flow. Further, that faster simultaneous communication mechanisms must be established between government departments (ie. FAX network of key departments).

Response - In future operations a Health Department representative will be present in the Emergency Operations Centre. Revisions and modification of communications systems in the EOC are completed. Rural Development will assist in the compilation of municipal FAX numbers for EOC use.

5.4 EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES (Continued)

5.4.2 **Evacuation Lead-Time for Health Facilities** - Due to a number of special considerations there is a necessity to ready health facilities for evacuation well in advance of the general population.

Recommendation - That primary fire response agencies be acquainted with this necessity and establish Standard Operating Procedures for the early notification of EHS and ESS where the evacuation of Hospitals, Special Care Facilities, Day Care Centres, etc. may be required. Natural Resources provides EMO with daily forest fire updates. These updates should be distributed to EHS and ESS.

Response - This problem is ongoing. EHS will work with Natural Resources to ensure that hospitals and Personal Care Homes receive alerts as a precautionary measures. EMO will ensure notification of EHS and ESS regarding forest fire or other major emergency situations.

5.4.3 **Evacuation From Federal Jurisdiction Lands** - That clear lines of authority must be established when an evacuation involving lands under federal jurisdiction occurs.

Recommendation.-.That through the coordination efforts of EMO and EPC appropriate provincial and federal departments (respectively) be brought together to formulate procedures and lines of authority for the evacuation of federal lands.

Response - Procedures and authority for the evacuation of persons from lands within federal jurisdiction will be developed in the Native Communityies' emergency planning process.

5.4.4 **Medics for Fire Fighters** - That during fire emergencies the number of fire fighters requiring a fire medic should be established. It should be remembered that each fire is different and it would be very difficult to determine the actual number of medics required.

Response - Natural Resources have situation in hand.

5.5 EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES

5.5.1 **ESS Emergency Response** .-.Clearly, the initial response capacity of Emergency Social Services (ESS) was inadequate. The Department is currently in the process of restructuring its emergency response capacity as well as its ongoing responsibilities with respect to emergency preparedness planning, training and liaison with other provincial departments, the federal government and other provincial organizations outside of the government.

5.5 EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES (Continued)

5.5.1 ESS Emergency Response (Continued)

Response - Actioned by ESS.

5.6 ENVIRONMENT

5.6.1 Many of the evacuations which occurred during the summer forest fire situation were based on perceived health effects from smoke conditions present in the communities. Air quality has never been a concern during previous fire incidents, and the government was unprepared, in this instance, to deal with the issue. Considering the heightened profile of environmental matters in the media, and with the public, it is anticipated that this issue will become of concern in future incidents, as well.

To better prepare for this issue, it is recommended that the following procedures be carried out:

a) Establishment of clear policies/guidelines regarding evacuations due to smoke conditions, in concert with representation from the provincial departments of Health and Environment, Emergency Measures Organization, and federal agencies, if appropriate;

b) Establishment of standard information packages (paper, audio/visual) for dissemination during smoke incidents, describing health effects, and methods of alleviating these effects. Specific information should be prepared for the following target groups:

(i) General Public
(ii) Health Officials, all levels
(iii) Emergency Officers involved in planning and implementation of evacuation efforts;

c) Examination of need and requirement for establishment of Task Group which may be deployed into communities affected by smoke, to make on-site determinations of severity of effects from smoke in area.

Response - Guidelines for the evacuation of persons due to smoke conditions have been established by Environmental Control Services and Emergency Health Services. These guidelines include health protection procedures for persons remaining in a smoky environment.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.7 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

5.7.1 **Staffing** - The Department of Highways and Transportation was in position to respond to the emergency. It was unfortunate that our representative on the CTT was not replaced after being seconded to EMO. This situation will be rectified when an Assistant Departmental Emergency Preparedness Officer is named.

Response - Actioned by Highways and Transportation.

5.7.2 **Logistics** - It is recommended that a full time experienced logistics officer be employed by EMO. Logistics play a large role in any emergency and it must be co-ordinated at the highest practical level.

Response - EMO to use secondment of personnel when required.

5.8 MANITOBA TELEPHONE SYSTEM

5.8.1 **Emergency Operation Centres** - Extending the operating hours of the Regional Control Centres to function as Emergency Operating Centres proved to be very functional and reliable. This approach utilized field people familiar with local areas and thus emergency operations became an extension of normal duties. A central coordinator assisted the Regional staff by coordinating engineering, real estate and installation forces.

Response - No action required.

5.9 MANITOBA HYDRO

5.9.1 **Central Task Team** - The assembling of the Central Task Team on a regular basis during such a crisis is essential for good co-ordination and co-operation between key governmental departments/agencies.

5.9.2 **Regional EOC** - For a disaster such as this one, the formation or establishment of a local (eg. in Thompson) Emergency Operations Centre utilizing local representatives of the key government departments/agencies should be considered. Local problems would then be recognized more readily and acted upon as they occurred.

Response - EMO will address these recommendations during the review of the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

SECTION 3, JULY FIRES DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.10 ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

5.10.1 **Informing Evacuees** - That a single authority, known to the evacuees, be designated as the individual(s) who will provide evacuees with progress and situation reports.

Response - Emergency Social Services will ensure information flow to reception centres is maintained.

5.10.2 **Emergency Personnel Identification** - That emergency personnel authorized to remain in an evacuated area carry/display some means of official identification.

Response - EMO will assist local authorities with the development of Identification Tags.

5.11 CENTRAL TASK TEAM (CTT)

Review Meeting - A meeting was convened June 16, 1989 to review the response to the May fires. It was also an opportunity for the various departments involved to table preliminary reports on activities and costs. Discussions in the meeting also led to the development of a number of recommendations.

5.11.1 **Cause of Fire Starts** - Department of Natural Resources statistics reveal that a large number of the fires were human caused. Therefore, it would seem logical that pro-active initiatives to promote prevention and reduce the numbers of fires thus caused are required.

Recommendation - That EMO, Natural Resources Fire Program and the Office of the Fire Commissioner, along with other key departments meet to investigate options to reduce the number of human caused fires. Options could include such initiatives as Public Education/Awareness Programs, stricter enforcement of existing legislation, revising criteria and procedures for granting burning permits among other things.

Response - Fire prevention programs are now in place.

5.11.2 **CTT Activation** - Although the members of CTT were on alert status several days prior to the intense fires as much advance notice as possible can enhance the effectiveness of a response.

Recommendation - That when an emergency appears imminent preparatory meetings of the CTT are advisable.

Response - Actioned.

5.11 **CENTRAL TASK TEAM (CTT)** (Continued)

5.11.3 **Use of Emergency Powers** - Due to the fact that the Emergency Measures Act is relatively new and the use of emergency powers is for the most part untested, there needs to be some contact between EMO and the RCMP along with other pertinent departments to discuss this matter.

Recommendation - That EMO organize some training seminars to acquaint RCMP sub-division or detachment staff or staff from other departments on the philosophy and intent of the Emergency Measures Act and the implementation of some of the provisions, such as Emergency Powers, of the Act.

Response - To be actioned by EMO.

SPRING 1989 FOREST FIRE POST EMERGENCY REPORT

A. GENERAL

Manitoba's forested area, with the exception of the Southeastern corner of the Province, received very little precipitation over the winter, this coupled with the drought conditions of the 1988 summer and fall season presented the Department with critical volatile fire conditions.

As predicted by the Department, the extreme winter drought conditions and 1989 spring season with little moisture contributed to critical fire problems which deteriorated beginning the first week of May and by May 10th problem fires were occurring along the agro-forest fringe. Most of these fires were contributed to people caused ignitions.

The Interlake, Western, Eastern and Northwestern Regions developed into problem areas as soon as the snow had left the ground with major fires reported and actioned with the assistance of several government agencies co-ordinated primarily by the Department. The major fires actioned were;

Northwestern Region		Western Region	
Kelsey Lake	(A)	Barrows	(C)
Traders Lake	(B)	Bellsite	(D)
		Swan/Pelican	(E)
Eastern Region		**Interlake**	
Sandy River	(K)	Easterville	(F)
		Ashern	(G)
		Gypsumville/Dauphin River	(H)
		Hodgson/Fisher River	(I)
		Jackhead/Lake St. George	(J)

as indicated on attached map. (Appendix "A")

On May 11, E.M.O. alerted the Central Task Team as to the problems being encountered as life and property were now being threatened.

To June 14, 1989, Manitoba has reported 372 fires, with all but eight, being human caused. These fires have burnt over 773,688 ha and have provided 26,089 employment days to fire crews. Suppression costs todate total $11,122,700.00 as per Appendix "B".

REGIONAL SUMMARY OF FIRES

Region	No.	Forested	Non-Forested	Total
Northeast	43	20.0	82,280.0	82,300.0
Northwest	51	4,367.3	1,096.2	5,463.5
Western	83	58,195.0	17,168.0	75,363.0
Southwest	4	248.5	19.5	268.0
Interlake	112	315,000.0	234,000.0	549,000.0
Eastern	48	39,099.8	13,034.1	52,133.9
Southeast	14	1,599.8	6,574.2	8,174.0
Whiteshell	17	295.6	690.3	985.9
Total	372	418,826.0 ha	354,862.3 ha	773,668.3 ha

B. EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

- Lead Agency - Manitoba Natural Resources

Assistance Provided by:

- Manitoba Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Labour - Fire Commissioners Office
- Manitoba Highways & Transportation
- Manitoba Hydro
- Manitoba Telephone System
- Emergency Health Services
- Government Services
- R.C.M.P.
- Canadian Forces, Prairie Region HQ.
- Emergency Measures Organization
- Emergency Preparedness Canada
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
- Numerous Fire Departments

C. **SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

- First fires reported to Provincial Fire Centre, April 19, 1989.
- Between May 1 and May 20, 269 fires reported to P.F.C.
- May 10, fires pushed by strong winds began to consume large areas of grassland and some forested land forcing the start of a major fire suppression effort.
- May 11, 1989, Central Task Team called as evacuations were underway or completed.
- During this period, May 11 to May 20, people were evacuated from the communities of:
  - Jackhead
  - Dallas
  - Red Rose
  - Fisher River
  - Camper
  - Anama Bay
  - Cowan
  - Briggs Spur
  - Camperville
  - Red Deer Lake
  - Manigotogan
  - Hole River
  - Seymourville
  - Big Black River
  - Wanipigow Cottage Subdivision
- Travel restrictions were imposed on the affected areas beginning May 12 and ending May 20, 1989.
- Roadblocks were in place in the Eastern, Western and Interlake Regions because of fires crossing or threatening highways and roads.
- Additional manpower and aircraft mobilized at peak - 46 helicopters, 15 waterbombers and over 1,700 people were engaged on direct fire suppression activities.

- Substantial property damage occurred as follows:

  Interlake Region

  - miles of fence lines
  - 15 homes in and around Ashern, Manitoba (G)*
  - damage to 28 other out buildings (G)
  - 2 homes Fisher River Indian Reserve (I)
  - 1 cottage at Lake St. George (J)
  - 1 home at Hodgson (I)
  - 2 homes at Easterville (F)

  Eastern Region

  - 15 cottages at English Lake (K)

  Western Region

  - 2 out buildings at Briggs Spur (E)

* As indicated on Fire Occurrence Map, spring 1989.

D. EMERGENCY COSTS

Direct Fire Suppression Costs to June 15, 1989 $11,122,700.00

E. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is apparent that Manitoba Natural Resources and the Fire Commissioners Office and staff are not aware of each organization's capabilities.

  a) The Fire Commissioner supplied staff that co-ordinated the evacuation of some areas.

  b) Through the Mutual Aid Program, obtained and moved fire trucks and personnel to protect property.

  c) Provided pumpers for protection in and around communities that could move large volumes of water specifically as set up at Cowan.

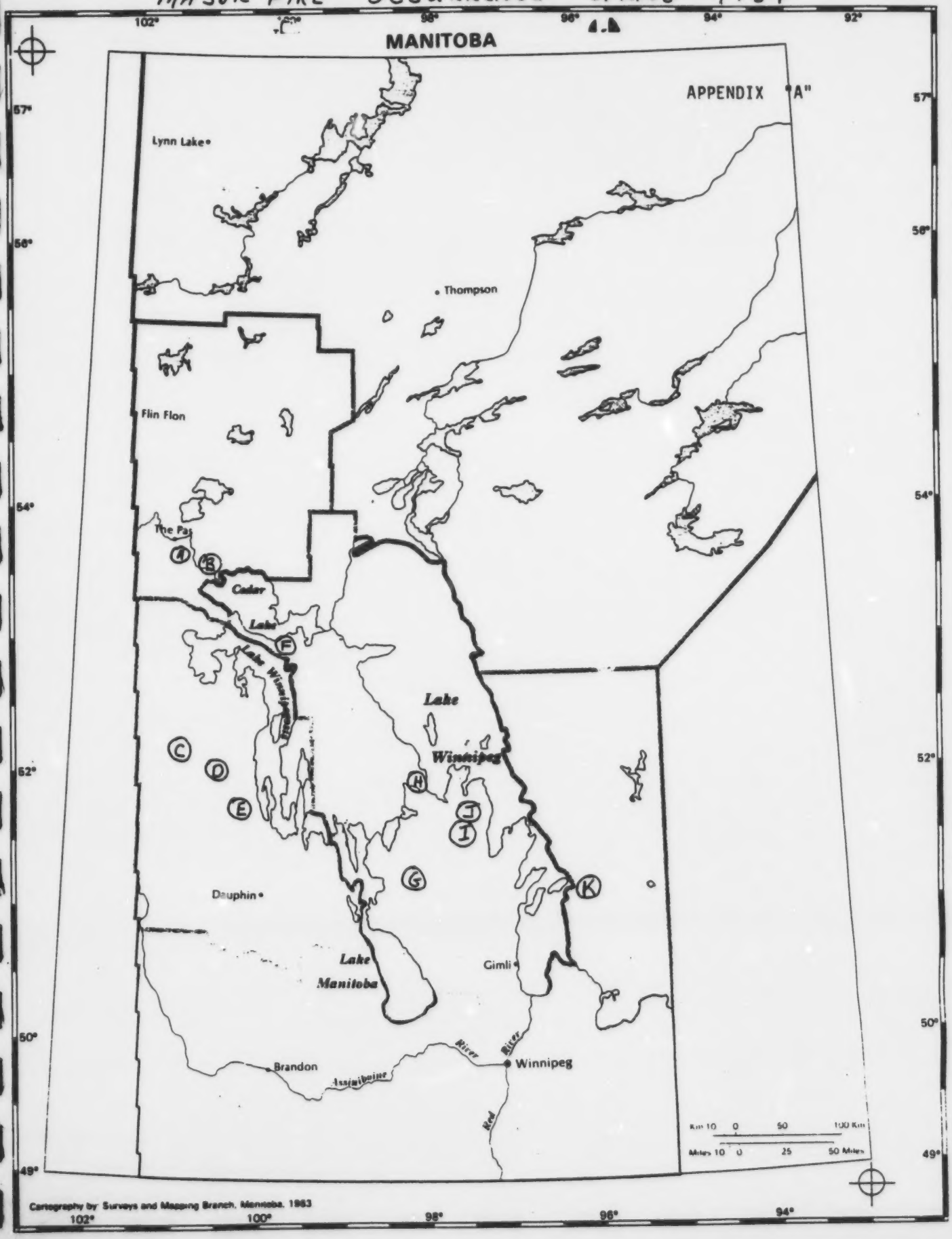
1. We recommend that the Fire Commissioner's field staff meet with Fire Program staff and members of the Provincial Fire Teams this fall to ascertain each others capabilities, lines of authority, responsibilities, etc.

2. That when a grass, forest or bush fire is threatening a community or property the local Mutual Aid District become involved, providing the equipment to protect these towns.

3. A Fire Command System be developed and implemented using and involving Fire Commissioner's staff, Mutual Aid Districts, R.C.M.P., other Government Agencies, local Governments and Manitoba Natural Resources staff.

4. Manitoba Natural Resources enter into formal agreements that stipulate the responsibilities of the various agencies involved in fire suppression activities.

MAJOR FIRE OCCURRENCE SPRING 1989



APPENDIX "B"

1989 Fire - Extra Suppression Costs

From April 1, 1989 to June 14, 1989

	Sandy River/ Manigotogan	Ashern/ Fisher River	Swan/ Pelican	Others	Total
Wages	418.1	498.0	385.0	1,396.3	2,697.4
Aircraft Equipment and supplies	1,836.3	2,216.8	2,053.0	2,099.2	8,205.3
Support from other Departments	60.0	90.0	70.0	--	220.0
TOTAL	2,314.4	2,804.8	2,508.0	3,495.5	11,122.7

1989 FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY CRITIQUE

A. GENERAL

The Department's involvement with forest fires began early in May with emergency conditions experienced in that period in southern areas of the Province. Our involvement with the other members of the Central Task Team is detailed in our report entitled "Spring 1989 Forest Fire Post Emergency Report" for the spring fires. After the spring problems, the incidence of fires continued at a normal pace up to June 30, 1989, at which time only 442 fires had been recorded with the majority, or 401 being caused by human activity.

However, during the next 30 days to July 30, 1989 the number and cause of fires changed dramatically and by July 30th 991 fires had been recorded, 536 lightning caused and 455 human caused. August 1989 contributed an additional 117 new fires and by August 30th 1108 fires had been reported in Manitoba. A detailed summary by cause, Appendix "A", shows weekly breakdown for the months of July and August, 1989.

Dry lightning storms from July 10th thru to July 20th, 1989 contributed to the severe fire problems that developed. The resulting forest fires caused the evacuation of over 23,000 people from most communities in northern Manitoba as follows:

Northwest Region	Snow Lake, Sherridon/Cold Lake, Grand Rapids.
Northeast Region	Pukatawagan, Leaf Rapids, Nelson House, Cross Lake, Norway House, Ilford, Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage, Island Lake area and health evacuations from most other communities in the north.

These evacuations were handled primarily by the local authorities with assistance of the members of the Central Task Teams agencies as needed. The evacuation will be detailed by these agencies in their reports to the Central Task Team. Manitoba Natural Resources involvement was primarily advising the local authorities of the situation and only the communities of Cross Lake, Norway House, Nelson House, Leaf Rapids, Pukatawagan in the Northeastern Region and Sherridon, Snow Lake and Grand Rapids in the Northwestern Region were evacuated

because of the immediate threat of forest fires. Two communities, Snow Lake and Pukatawagan needed the assistance of Manitoba Natural Resources's suppression helicopters to safely remove non essential people.

Besides the severe incidence of lightning fires, several fires suspected to be human caused affected the forest fire suppression efforts, these being fires at Cross Lake, Norway House and Ilford. The serious nature of the new starts near or adjacent to the northern communities directly caused the Department's suppression effort to be focused on the protection of human life and property away from its mandate to protect the forest resource, resulting in substantial losses to the forested areas.

Provincial Fire Teams and most Natural Resource Officers in the Province were involved in suppression and major efforts were focused as follows:

A. Sherridon/Cold Lake
B. Snow Lake
C. Talbot Lake
D. Grand Rapids
E. Norway House
F. Cross Lake
G. Nelson House
H. Leaf Rapids
I. Thicket Portage
J. Pikwitonei
K. Island Lake
L. Gods Lake
M. Oxford House
N. Ilford
O. Gillam
P. Pukatawagan

as shown on attached map, Appendix "B" Major Fires June 30 - August 30, 1989.

SUMMARY OF FIRES REPORTED TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1989

REGION	HUMAN CAUSED	LIGHTNING	TOTAL	AREA BURNT
Northeast	106	362	468	1,623,600 ha
Northwest	64	168	232	301,900 ha
Southeast	15		15	8,100 ha
Southwest	4		4	300 ha
Eastern	57	68	125	96,800 ha
Interlake	130	10	140	562,000 ha
Western	95	6	101	75,500 ha
Whiteshell	21	11	32	1,000 ha
Total	492	625	1117	* 2,669,200 ha

* Estimate of area burnt likely to increase once remote mapping has been completed.

Manitoba Natural Resources estimated total expenditures to September 13 are $51,154,600.00

In addition to the resources available in Manitoba, several other forest fire protection agencies assisted under the Mutual Aid Resources Sharing Agreement (M.A.R.S.) as follows:

British Columbia	Fire Equipment, Infra Red Scanners and Operators.
Alberta	CL-215 Waterbombers, Initial Attack (H.A.C.) Crew, Fire Equipment, Infra Red Scanner and Burnout Equipment.
Saskatchewan	Waterbomber support.
Ontario	Fire Suppression Equipment, Infra Red Scanners and Operator, Initial Attack Crew. Ontario's facilities at Thunder Bay and Dryden used to refurbish fire hose.

Yukon	CL-215 Waterbombers.
Northwest Territories	CL-215 Waterbombers and Helicopters.
Boise Interagency Fire Centre - U.S. Forest Service	Fire Equipment, High Level Scanner Aircraft and Operators.

B. EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

- Lead Agency - Manitoba Natural Resources
  Assistance Provided by:
  - Manitoba Northern Affairs
  - Manitoba Labour - Fire Commissioner's Office
  - Manitoba Highways & Transportation
  - Manitoba Hydro
  - Manitoba Telephone System
  - Emergency Health Services
  - Emergency Social Services
  - Manitoba Government Services
  - R.C.M.P.
  - Canadian Armed Forces, Prairie Region H.Q.
  - Emergency Measures Organization
  - Emergency Preparedness Canada
  - Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
  - Numerous Fire Departments

C. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Dry lightning being reported throughout the northern areas of the Province starting the first part of July.

- Multiple fire starts are being reported daily. Initial attack crews holding most fires.

- Number of fires burning increasing daily throughout first 15 days of July.

- Storms on July 15th, 16th, 17th thru to July 30th ignite 495 new forest fires peaking on July 17th when 89 new starts detected.

- In addition, human caused fires at Cross Lake and Norway House resulted in loss of four homes at Norway House and the evacuation of these communities.

- 30 temperatures and low humidities, common throughout Manitoba, with no appreciable rainfalls recorded.

- July 18, 1989 - Roger Cross Fire Team assigned to Talbot Lake Fires.

- July 20, 1989 - E.M.O. Central Task Team alerted.

- July 19 - 20, 1989 - Throughout the night, 4,000 residents of Cross Lake were evacuated because of a 1,000 ha fire burning adjacent to community.

- July 21, 1989 - Heavy smoke in northern Manitoba results in information check points set up. Fire south of Snow Lake may pose threat to that community. Sherridon/Cold Lake put on evacuation alert because of Webb Lake fire, along with Snow Lake and Herbs Landing. Herb Lake Landing and Sherridon/Cold Lake evacuated by 3:30 p.m.

  Train being moved to Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei to evacuate non essential people. Medical evacuation occurring throughout north because of smoke problems. All main roads in northern Manitoba now closed because of smoke.

- July 22, 1989

  10:00 A.M. - Overnight, Snow Lake evacuated by helicopters with only 700 still in town by 8:00 a.m.
  - Sherridon/Cold Lake evacuation completed.
  - Pikwitonei evacuated.

- Thicket Portage evacuated.
- Ilford people evacuated by train yesterday.
- Leaf Rapids evacuation alert.

3:00 A.M.
- Leaf Rapids being evacuated to Lynn Lake.
- Human caused fire at Norway House results in loss of four homes and evacuation of the community.
- Grand Rapids fire at Morrison Lake takes off, threatens community, evacuation alert in place.

- July 23, 1989

9:00 A.M.
- 1,600 residents of Norway House evacuated.
- Evacuation of Gillam.
- Medical evacuations occurring at Nelson House.

2:45 P.M.
- Nelson House evacuation recommended.

8:30 P.M.
- State of Emergency declared by Albert Drieger, Minister responsible for E.M.O. 18,000 people now have been evacuated.

9:30 P.M.
- Fire at Sisipuk Lake cause Pukatawagan evacuation order.
- Grand Rapids being evacuated.

Suppression efforts stabilizing control lines adjacent to communities, no additional property losses reported.

- July 24, 1989

9:00 A.M.
- Fire reported near Gods River, evacuation being considered.
- Nelson House evacuation now complete.
- 300 people left in Pukatawagan, evacuation occurred at night by helicopters.
- Fire near Arnot could knock out rail line to Churchill, protection being provided by sprinklers and fire crews.

- Established firelines holding with conditions stabilizing at Cross Lake, Norway House, Snow Lake, Sherridon, Pikwitonei and Leaf Rapids.
- Webb Lake fire - Sherridon destroyed outcamp at Walton Lake, Big Four Lodge on Elbow Lake and one cabin at Elbow Lake Lodge.
- York Landing evacuated.

224 fires now burning, 1,636 firefighters employed with 65 helicopters and 11 waterbombers.

Smoke causes medical evacuations to occur at Garden Hill, God's River, St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack, Red Sucker Lake, Oxford House, Poplar River.

Total evacuees now estimated at 19,000.

- July 25, 1989 - Some moisture occurred overnight in parts of northern Manitoba, conditions now stabilizing in these areas.
  - Suppression efforts continued lines stabilizing.

- July 26, 1989
  10:00 A.M. - Evacuees now total 25,000.
  - Rainfall reported in Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake areas have stabilized fires in those districts, however lightning still being reported.
  - Cooler temperatures assisting suppression crews.
  - Talbot Lake fires burning out of control.
  - 1,500 residents of Garden Hill evacuated. Evacuations have now effected 23 communities.

- July 27, 1989 - Fire conditions stabilized and evacuees from Cross Lake (3,600 people) allowed to return home.
  - Progress being made on the firelines with an estimated 1,450 firefighters employed.

- Convoys being escorted to communities with food and people by R.C.M.P. through smoke areas.
- Evacuation alert of Gillam rescinded.
- Travel restrictions placed on southern Manitoba.

- July 28, 1989 - Residents of Grand Rapids allowed to return.
- Fire suppression efforts continue, lines holding.

- July 29, 1989 - Residents of Norway House allowed to return.
- Firelines still being stabilized.

- July 30, 1989 - Leaf Rapids evacuees returned to their community.
- Snow Lake people allowed to return.

- July 31, 1989 - Fire conditions have stabilized. Fires still could cause problems at Nelson House, Pukatawagan and Pikwitonei.
- Smoke keeping other communities from returning.

- August 1, 1989- Temperature increasing could cause suppression problems.
- Talbot Lake fires still not under control.
- Conditions continue to be stabilized.

- August 2, 1989- Suppression difficulties occurred on Webb Lake, Snow Lake, Talbot Lake and smoke has curtailed air operations.
- Northeast Region work continues on firelines with flare ups being reported.

- August 3, 1989- Some light rain reported in the north with rain/drizzle being recorded, no suppression problems. Rain missed the Talbot Lake fire area.

- August 4, 1989- People allowed to return to Nelson House.
- Rainfall reported in both northern Regions.

- **August 5, 1989**- Travel restrictions in north lifted.

- **August 6 - 15, 1989**
  - Conditions continued to improve with exception of Talbot Lake area which received very little rain and caused some suppression problems. A gradual demobilization of resources continued.

- **August 15 - 30, 1989**
  - Demobilization continued with the majority of the additional aircraft released. Total losses exceed 2.5 million hectares.

Property Losses from Fires

6 houses	-	4 Norway House	2 Wekusko Siding
4 cottages	-	Webb Lake	
2 lodges	-	1 Elbow Lake	1 Oxford House

Several Outcamps.

Numerous trappers cabins - assessment now underway to determine their losses.

D. EMERGENCY COSTS

Suppression costs exceed 54 million dollars.

E. COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

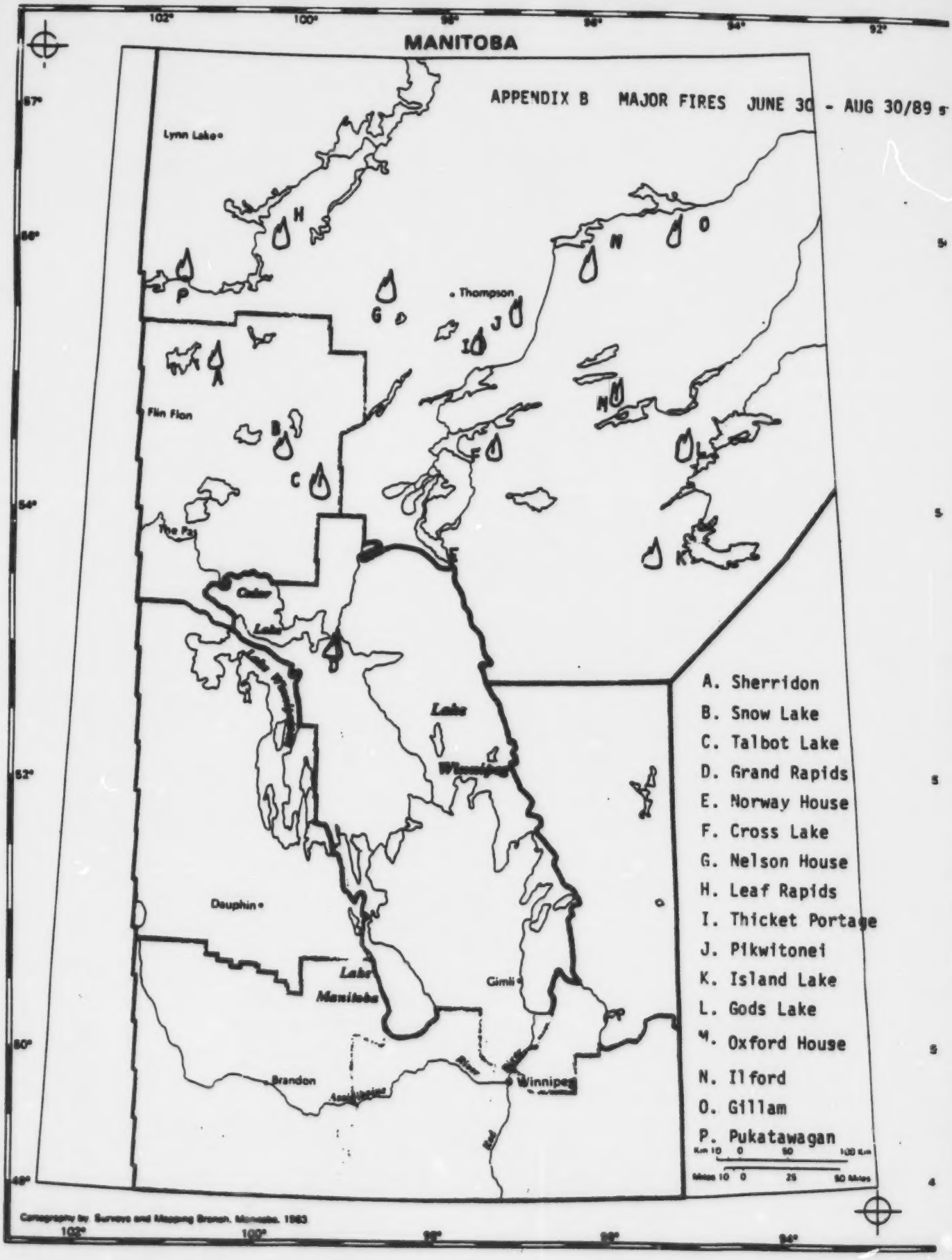
Internal, external and an independent review is being recommended to ascertain and improve the Province's forest fire suppression capabilities. These reviews will be conducted throughout the upcoming months with their findings brought to the Government for consideration and/or implementation.

Manitoba Natural Resources wishes to thank all involved in the summer fire season, we can be proud that no loss of life occurred.

APPENDIX "A"

JUNE 30TH - AUGUST 30TH, 1989
WEEKLY DISTRIBUTION OF FOREST FIRES

PERIOD ENDING	NEW		OUT	BURNING	TODATE
	Human	Lightning			
June 30, 1989	401	41	419	23	442
July 10, 1989	25	79	66	61	546
July 16, 1989	8	38	26	81	592
July 22, 1989	5	272	127	231	869
July 30, 1989	16	106	138	215	991
August 5, 1989	2	21	62	176	1,014
August 11, 1989	7	22	45	160	1,043
August 18, 1989	10	30	34	166	1,083
August 30, 1989	8	17	121	70	1,108


MANITOBA
APPENDIX B MAJOR FIRES JUNE 30 - AUG 30/89
Lynn Lake
Thompson
Flin Flon
The Pas
Dauphin
Brandon
Winnipeg
Gimli
Lake Manitoba
A. Sherridon
B. Snow Lake
C. Talbot Lake
D. Grand Rapids
E. Norway House
F. Cross Lake
G. Nelson House
H. Leaf Rapids
I. Thicket Portage
J. Pikwitonei
K. Island Lake
L. Gods Lake
M. Oxford House
N. Ilford
O. Gillam
P. Pukatawagan
Cartography by Surveys and Mapping Branch, Manitoba, 1989

NORTHERN AFFAIRS
POST EMERGENCY REPORT

May Forest Fires

May forest fires resulted in the evacuation of Red Deer Lake, Manigotogan, Seymourville, Aghaming, Dauphin River and Red Deer Lake. Evacuees were received in the nearby community of Barrows. The other community residents were predominantly established in Selkirk, Winnipeg and Pine Falls.

Emergency Response Organization

The Emergency Preparedness Officer contacted the respective regional officer of the Department of Northern Affairs with the evacuation alert.

Subsequently, Northern Affairs personnel were:

a) dispatched to respective communities to assist the local authority in the event of evacuation;

b) constant/regular communication was kept with Regional office and Emergency Preparedness Officer;

c) communities were prepared with an emergency plan and necessary contacts initiated;

d) communities evacuated were established via a reception centre as to the placement location;

e) Northern Affairs staff were in twice daily contact with evacuees to ensure their immediate needs were met as well as being kept informed of fire status as it affected their communities;

f) other respective departments such as Community Services, Health Department, etc. were involved;

g) re-entry was also co-ordinated via Northern Affairs personnel and appropriate departments.

Emergency Costs

The Department of Northern Affairs incurred costs for the May fires totalling $55,311.90 (supporting documents previously submitted).

General Comments

a) Northern Affairs staff assisted reserves in their evacuation process:

Northern Affairs does not have a mandate on reserves but because we were involved with communities, an adjacent reserve was treated the same. It is recognized Band Councils have the authority and responsibilities in time of an emergency but they also need assistance at the local level.

I recommend DIAND ensure they have staff in the field to work, assist or advise the elected Band members. They should also assist in establishing evacuees at temporary facilities.

In an instance at Garden Hill, the evacuees from Red Sucker Lake did not have any contact made with them for 4 days. They were not provided with emergency food vouchers as the Band did not know their responsibility, authority or cost recovery process. The Band contacted Northern Affairs for assistance.

A procedural manual should be developed for DIAND staff to advise how an emergency should be handled or who does what. A procedural manual should be jointly developed for Northern Affairs and DIAND staff where there are abutting communities.

Training/Development

1) EMO should have field personnel to travel to the reserves/communities to ensure emergency response training is in place. Currently it appears if a community plan is developed, that is sufficient. Needless to say, it is quite different to have a plan than to implement one.

   Presently, Northern Affairs staff will travel to Arnprior when seats are available for emergency planning training. This training should be available to all northern communities and staff at a more local level.

2) Strong emphasis is placed upon evacuation procedures, but equally required is the re-entry procedures.

It is probably more difficult to re-enter than to evacuate. Training/ development emphasis are required in this regard.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS
POST EMERGENCY REPORT

July Forest Fires

July forest fires resulted in the evacuation of several northern and remote communities (i.e., Norway House, Sherridon, Cross Lake, Herb Lake Landing, Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei, Nelson House, God's Narrows, God's River, and several reserves and municipalities).

Medi vacs took place in other Northern Affairs communities.

Emergency Response Organization

The Emergency Preparedness Office contacted the respective regional officer of the Department of Northern Affairs with the evacuation alert and/or commence evacuation procedures.

Subsequently, Northern Affairs personnel were:

a) dispatched to respective communities to assist local authority in the event of evacuation;

b) constant/regular communication with fire management office in Winnipeg and Thompson;

c) communities took steps to implement emergency plan;

d) reception centres established at specified locations with Northern Affairs present at all times;

e) fire officers met with community officials daily to keep people abreast of situations.

Emergency Costs

The Department of Northern Affairs incurred costs in the $1.4 million range.

General Comments

a) Northern Affairs staff assisted reserves in the evacuation. DIAND should have staff at the local level as well as receiving areas. Indian Affairs should also clearly define the cost recovery process to their respective bands. In many cases, Northern Affairs or other departments are receiving bills from local suppliers which were at the request of the bands. If these bills are shuffled from department to department, the local supplier is without funds resulting from the provision of service in a time of emergency.

b) Northern Affairs has paid some bills belonging to bands (adjacent) and processing through Vote 18 for recovery.

c) Greater authority should be provided to the re-entry committee if one is established in the north. It does not seem reasonable to develop re-entry plans to be sent south for approval. Perhaps EMO local staff could have delegated authority with Winnipeg staff acting as a support mechanism.

d) A very clear policy should be developed relating to evacuations of people who have spent extended periods of time in a smoky environment. Should also have additional health staff available to relieve the northern nurses and allow them opportunity to rest. Should have a preventative smoke inhalation program which would educate residents in times of heavy smoke situations. This program should recognize the inferior structures of buildings in the north.

e) Recognized policy/procedure should be developed to compensate people such as trappers, fishermen, loggers for loss of resources sustained resulting from fires or any other state of emergency.

Training/Development

1) EMO personnel should be travelling to all municipalities and communities to assist in development of plans, mock disasters, implementation systems, etc.

2) Training such as offered as Arnprior should be at regional or local levels to allow community residents and government employees to participate.

Financial Considerations

Northern Affairs utilized capital funds to provide payments to suppliers during the state of emergency. Government Services were provided with estimated costs in early August and ITF's in early September (supporting documents were included). As of October 13th, no reimbursement has been made to tho Department to continue the capital delivery mandate of the Department.

A mechanism should be developed to allow for immediate or at least much sooner reimbursement whether it be for evacuation, fire fighting or receiving costs.

FIRE EVACUATION
APPROVAL FORM FOR COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY

RE-ENTRY FOR THE COMMUNITY OF:

GOVERNMENT CONTACT
OFFICER: Charlie Boyd PHONE NUMBER 778-4411 Ext. 683

COMMUNITY CONTACTS:

NAME PHONE NUMBER

_____ _____

_____ _____

A. Essential People Back in Community (List Names and Phone Numbers)

1.) RCMP and/or Band Constable:

2.) Medical Personnel (Doctors/Nurses):

3.) Northern Affairs Coordinator:

4.) Chief and Council Members:

5.) Mayor and Community Council:

6.) Ambulance Drivers:

7.) Fire Department Personnel:

Cont'd...

Page 2....

8.) Natural Resources Personnel:

9.) Nursing Home Personnel:

10.) Store Managers/Clerks

11.) Others:

B. Essential Services: (Please tick)

____Nursing station facilities

____Senior's home facilities

____Alternate accommodation available if homes are damaged

____Fire fighting equipment

____Mail service

____Safe water

____Food and essential supplies (diapers, etc.) in stores

____Medical supplies

____Adequate vehicle fuel supplies

*NOTE: CAUTION PEOPLE TO BOIL DRINKING WATER IF NECESSARY

Con'd...

Page 3...

C. Transportation:

1.) Vehicles: _____Private vehicles

_____Community/School Buses. No Available____

_____Commercial Buses: Thompson Bus Lines

Grey Goose

Other:_____

2.) Fuel: Adequate fuel supply for return trip____ and $_____ required. Address of Supplier:

D. Access: Roads Open_____
Airport_____
Railways Open_____

E. Location of Evacuees: Names and Places (Attach List)

F. Correct community destination confirmed for each passenger_____

G. Re-Entry Registration Plans Confirmed_____
Location_____

Personnel_____

H. List of Elderly/Disabled attached_____

I. Reception Committee - to visit homes to ensure everything is okay after people arrive home.

J. SATISFACTORY CONDITIONS CONFIRMED
- FIRE REPORT UPDATED-NATURAL RESOURCES APPROVAL_____
- SMOKE CONDITIONS SATISFACTORY AS APPROVED BY COMMUNITY OFFICIALS & MEDICAL PERSONNEL_____
- FOOD SUPPLIES ADEQUATE_____
ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES ADEQUATE_____
- COMMUNITY FUEL SUPPLIES ADEQUATE FOR FURTHER EVACUATION IF REQUIRED_____ _____

- Local Community Approval _____
- EMO Approval _____

SPRING FOREST FIRES '89

General

Due to an abnormally dry period and combined with hot, windy weather, Manitoba faced a spring fire situation which has since been labelled as the worst in recorded history. In the time between May 10, 1989 and May 20, 1989 over 700,000 hectares of forest burned. To control this conflagration, Natural Resources required some 13,000 man days of firefighters, numerous pieces of heavy equipment, 70 specialized aircraft and the cooperation of other provincial government departments including the Department of Health which was coordinated by M.H.S.C. Emergency Health Services.

Response

Due to the extent of the fires the Manitoba Department of Health, Emergency Health Services was placed on alert by Emergency Measures Organization at 1:30 p.m. May 11, 1989. The information provided by EMO stated that because of a change in the fire situation the personal care home in Fisher River was being threatened. Although under federal jurisdiction, the Fisher River Indian Band requested assistance through Manitoba EMO. Since this request concerned a health care facility, EHS was notified. The following is an account of the next nine days which saw 22 long term care residents evacuated from Fisher River, the anticipated evacuation of Ashern Hospital and fire medics sent to the Manigotogan fire base camp.

Sequence of Events

Thursday, May 11, 1989 - 1:30 p.m.

EMO alerted the EHS on call officer that fire was threatening the Fisher River personal care home. The Fisher River Band was requesting assistance in the relocation and care of 22 evacuees. EHS immediately notified the M.H.S.C. Long Term Care Division. An emergency meeting was called and a strategy formulated to deal with the evacuation request. It was determined that the Deer Lodge Centre in Winnipeg could accommodate all 22 residents. Due to the lack of communication and coordination at Fisher River, a staff representative from each of EHS and Long Term Care responded to the scene to assist and liaise with the tribal council. Relocation arrangements were made and the evacuees were transported to Winnipeg arriving at Deer Lodge at 9:15 p.m.

During the Fisher evacuation, information was received that Ashern was also in danger at 3:50 p.m. Due to communication problems, we were unable to get clear information from anyone at the scene. The RCMP stated the "fire is close". Hospital officials felt they should be safe at this time. EHS arranged to use the Narrows Lodge if the hospital had to be evacuated. EHS was informed that radio stations were stating that Ashern

Hospital was evacuating; this was checked and found out to be false. EMO was notified at 8:10 p.m. to contact radio stations with true information.

To coordinate the situation a health emergency operation centre was established at M.H.S.C. Representatives from Rural, Urban and Long Term Care Facilities' Divisions and EHS met and received continuous, first hand, up-to-date information regarding developments. The centre setup included seven telephone lines and ambulance radio access for communication with the affected areas.

May 12, 1989

Fires continued to burn out of control due to high temperature and high winds. There were three large fires of concern; the Cowan fire, Interlake fire (Ashern and Fisher River) and the Manigotogan. However, these fires were posing very little threat to any health care facilities on this day. Also only a small number of ground crews were fighting these fires thus causing no need to provide any fire medics.

May 13, 1989

Fire control felt that the situation in Fisher River was now safe enough to allow the return of the patients of the personal care home. Arrangements were made by M.H.S.C. staff in consultation with Chief Wesly Hart of Fisher River Band. Arrangements were complete when a new fire broke out causing more threat to the community; travel arrangements were cancelled. All other fire conditions remained the same.

May 14, 1989

Fire threat to Fisher River again diminished. A request was made by the Band Council to have residents returned back to Fisher River. Again, arrangements were made with all necessary agencies. Contact was made with tribal councillor David Crates who ensured all arrangements at that end were complete to receive the residents. All residents left for Fisher River at 4:00 p.m.

May 15, 1989

Due to the size, location and wind direction, the fire in Cowan began to cause problems in the Swan River Valley. This was due to heavy smoke conditions being reported in the area. Special consideration was to be given to the Swan River Hospital and personal care homes in the area. The situation remained fairly stable and no evacuation of facilities was required. All other fires remained out of control, however there was no threat to facilities or requirement for medics.

May 16, 1989

Evacuation was ordered again at 4:00 p.m., due to another change in the Fisher River fire. This information was received from David Crates, acting on behalf of Chief Hart. Arrangements were made with Kay Thomson, Director, Long Term Care, and EHS to re-evacuate the same 22 residents from Fisher River Personal Care Home to Percy E. Moore Hospital in Hodgson. These residents were then once again moved to Deer Lodge Centre in Winnipeg. A staff representative from EHS went to Hodgson to assist and provide a means of communications between the site and M.H.S.C. All residents arrived at Deer Lodge at 9:15 p.m.

May 17, 1989

Weather remained hot, dry and windy. The fires were still out of control, thus limiting ground crew involvement. Due to the limited amount of firefighters there was no requirement for medics at fire bases. Also, there were no immediate threats to any health care facility.

May 18, 1989

Weather conditions began to change, allowing ground fire crews to begin combating fires. A request was made from Natural Resources to provide two fire medics for the fire in Manigotogan area. Both medics were in place at 3:40 p.m. All other fires in the province were beginning to improve. There was no threat to facilities, however, Fisher River Personal Care Home residents remained in Winnipeg until the region could be deemed safe.

May 19, 1989

A request was made by David Crate of Fisher River Band requested to have residents returned. After checking with EMO and Natural Resources, it was confirmed the area of Fisher River was now safe. Kay Thomson of Long Term Care was notified and arrangements were made to have residents returned to Fisher River Personal Care Home. The residents left Deer Lodge at 2:00 p.m. The other fire situations around the province were beginning to stabilize, two fire medics were still at Bisset camp near Manigotogan.

May 20, 1989

Natural Resources deemed the fire situation was now under control. All fires were being contained with no threat to any health care facilities. The fire in the Manigotogan Region was at a point where ground crews could begin leaving. With the reduction of manpower, both fire medics could leave.

Natural Resources declared this provincial fire emergency over.

Emergency Costs

Acquisition of supplies to create fire medic kits	$6,000.00 (approx.)
Fire medics	600.00
Staff overtime (time off in lieu)	1,200.00 (approx.)
Transportation of Fisher PCH residents (twice)	6,403.93
Accommodation costs at Deer Lodge	$26,147.03
TOTAL	$40,350.96

Recommendations

a) When a multi agency response is warranted, an EHS representative should sit at the EMO Emergency Operations Centre to ensure a speedy, accurate, complete and efficient information flow.

b) Faster, simultaneous communication mechanisms must be established between government departments, ie. FAX.

c) Other agencies should be informed that considerably more lead time is needed to evacuate health facilities due to the medical or limited physical conditions of the residents. EHS should be advised as early as possible of any potential threat to health facilities.

d) Clear lines of authority must be established for use when an evacuation involving a federal native reserve occurs.

e) The number of fire fighters requiring a fire medic should be established.

KH/lr/pc-FIRES89
July 3, 1989

FOREST FIRES - MAY, 1989

The Director of Emergency Social Services was called by the E.M.O. Duty Officer on May 10, 1989 indicating that the Community of Red Deer Lake had been evacuated to Barrows and that there was a possibility that Barrows, Powell, National Mills could also be evacuated should the fire turn around. Departmental staff in the Swan River area were alerted by the Parklands Regional Director that there is a possibility that they could be required to provide supportive services. Red Deer Lake residents were allowed to return to their community the week-end of May 13, 1989.

May 11, 1989, Hollow-water, Manigotogan and Seymourville were evacuated to Powerview - Pine Falls. We were advised that there were approximately 200 people who were to be evacuated to Winnipeg. Arrangements made with City of Winnipeg Social Services, Salvation Army and Red Cross to host these evacuees - 39 arrived. Additional 110 were to come out on Friday, May 12, 1989. 37 people were housed in Selkirk.

During this time the Interlake was also being affected. 89 people from the Jackhead Reserve were evacuated to Gimli. Fisher River was temporarily evacuated to Peguis Reserve. Dauphin River/Anama Bay was evacuated to Gypsumville.

Sunday, May 14, 1989, Cowan was evacuated to the community hall in Pine River and surrounding area to the R.M. of Minitonas.

Decision was made this date to provide Social Assistance to evacuees not being provided for at Gimli. All evacuees were provided for.

An additional 39 people from Lake St. Martin were evacuated to Gimli. There was also a possibility during this time of a large contingent of Fisher River evacuees going to Gimli.

There were a number of problems that arose during this time, but they were overcome.

The first group of evacuees were allowed to return home on Friday, May 19, 1989 with the last returning on Saturday, May 20, 1989.

Costs were estimated at about $75,000.00. However, this figure could be higher as bills are still being processed.

EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

FOREST FIRE EVACUATION - SUMMER, 1989

A. General

Beginning approximately July 17, 1989, a series of forest fires in northern Manitoba rapidly escalated requiring the evacuation of approximately 25,000 persons from remote northern communities, many accessible only by air.

B. Emergency Response Organization

The Department of Family Services is responsible for mobilizing emergency resources when the structure and capacity of regular social services is inadequate to meet the increased demands of a major natural disaster. This includes the following services: emergency lodging, emergency feeding, emergency clothing, social assistance and personal allowances for basic expenses of daily living, counselling and other personal services including enquiries about family members. The Department ensures that registration and enquiry response is available in cooperation with Red Cross.

The Department provides a 24 hour standby response capacity to the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) and is normally able to mobilize its central office and regional resources into an operational mode within one hour of the alert. The respective Regional Directors throughout Manitoba engage their staff in a collaborative effort with local city or municipal authorities to operationalize the emergency plan within the community and provide any required assistance and support to victims of disasters.

Central office staff, under the general direction of the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Ministers, provide overall policy direction, supervisory and back-up supports to the regional offices and the Emergency Measures Organization.

C. Sequence of Events

1. Tuesday, July 18, 1989: Back-up to Director of ESS alerted by EMO that escalation of forest fires in the north could threaten inhabited areas within days. Back-up remained on standby. Director of ESS on vacation leave. Initial evacuation of Cross Lake to Thompson began.

2. Wednesday, July 19, 1989: Evacuation of Cross Lake completed to Thompson, Wabowden, Cranberry Portage and a few to The Pas. ESS alerted to attend Central Task Team meeting at 1100 hours on Thursday, July 20, 1989.

3. Thursday, July 20, 1989: ESS staff on site at EMO (Jim Kowalchuk and Doug Sexsmith). Evacuation of Cross Lake completed and Thompson Region responding well. Concern and frustration with getting supplies to Thompson. ESS back-up person approved for vacation day on Friday, July 21, 1989 - replaced by Seymour Zidle at EMO site. Mr. Zidle had litt;e or no experience in emergency response procedures. The Assistant Deputy Minister conferred with Supervisor re: adequacy of response capacity. The Assistant Deputy Minister was assured that response was adequate based upon available information. Thompson remained the main reception centre with Snow Lake identified as next community slated for evacuation, depending upon weather conditions. Jim Kowalchuk on continued standby to EMO.

4. Friday, July 21, 1989: ESS representative, Seymour Zidle, on site at EMO headquaters. Major effort is to support Thompson Region - over 1,000 people in Thompson and Wabowden since Wednesday. Snow Lake and Oxford House on standby for evacuation. Serious concern expressed about the adequacy of ESS response at EMO headquaraters. Jim Kowalchuk on standby after 4:30 p.m.

5. Saturday, July 22, 1989: By midnight Friday, several communities (Snow Lake, Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage, Ilford) threatened - evacuation began to The Pas and Flin Flon overnight. The Assistant Deputy Minister, Winston Hodgins and Doug Sexsmith called to EMO headquarters at 1:00 a.m. and were joined by Jim Kowalchuk and Ernie Hasiuk at 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Serious concern expressed about availability of key ESS personnel on Friday and Friday night, July 21, 1989.

   Senior ESS staff (4) joined late Saturday afternoon by John Gow, Assistant Executive Director of Regional Operations. Decision made that ESS input would require a Departmental emergency coordinating centre and additional personnel to handle increasing demand for housing and emergency social services as more and more communities were put on standby for evacuation. The 5 available senior staff provided 24 hour ESS input at EMO site through to Monday at 0600 hours. Major activities included contacting regional offices to mobilize local emergency plans, develop reception centres and coordinate the acquisition and transportation of supplies, i.e. mattresses, towels, personal toiletry items, etc. in bulk.

6. Sunday, July 23, 1989: Significant organizational decisions made to strengthen the ESS work force and establish a Departmntal emergency coordinating centre work area in an adjacent boardroom at EMO headquarters. Boardroom was equipped with a multi-line phone system and the ESS 24 hour response augmented by additional staff from Family Services and Health who were organized into teams and scheduled on a shift basis with a designated supervisor for each shift. (See Appendix "A" for shift schedule.) One supervisor designated to attend Central Task Team meetings on a daily basis at 11:00 a.m.

7. Monday, July 24 - Friday, July 28, 1989: Ongoing development of reception centres, emergency lodging and feeding of approximately 25,000 persons. Dealing with issues of family members being separated from each other, coordination of flight destinations to available lodging and ongoing maintenance issues, e.g. adequacy of food allowances, discrepancies in allowances in different communities, personal emergencies, etc.

8. Saturday, July 29, 1989: Ongoing involvement in the re-entry phase of the emergency response with the Re-entry Committee.

9. Sunday, July 30, 1989: Re-entry planning begins for several communities cleared for return to their homes - Gillam, Snow Lake, Leaf Rapids, Norway House, Oxford House.

10. Monday, July 31 - Tuesday, August 8, 1989: Coordination of the evacuees return to their home communities continued over this period. Midnight to 6:00 a.m. shift was deleted and response teams reduced to 2 members with a supervisor on call via cellular phone 24 hours per day.

D. Emergency Costs

Overtime	$ 36,200.00
Reimbursement of Expenses	$ 3,400.00
TOTAL TO DATE	$ 39,600.00
Cost of lodging, food, etc.	Unavailable at this time.

E. Comments/Observations

1. A total of 165 employees from the Department of Family Services were involved in the evacuation and re-entry effort between Tuesday, July 18, 1989 and Tuesday, August 8, 1989. (See Appendix "B".)

2. A total of 284 external community organizations were specifically identified as having assisted the Department in the evacuation and re-entry effort: (See Appendix "C".)

Central Region	- 10
Interlake Region	- 21
Norman Region	- 37
Parklands Region	- 20
Thompson REgion	- 62
Westman Region	- 15
3 Winnipeg Regions	- 119
TOTAL	284

F. Recommendations/Current Actions

1. Clearly, the initial response capacity of ESS was inadequate and understaffed. The Department is currently in the process of restructuring its emergency response capacity as well as its ongoing responsibilities with respect to emergency preparedness planning, training and liaison with other provincial departments, the federal government and other provincial organizations outside of government. This process should be completed by November 30, 1989.

2. Key departmental staff who manned the ESS control centre at EMO headquarters on a 24 hour basis have requested an evaluation of the exercise and have made a number of specific recommendations to the Supervisors based upon their experience. (See Appendix "D".)

3. Further debriefing and consultation sessions are planned in early November, 1989 to address the concerns raised by some of the employees who were involved in this exercise.

4. While ESS had a somewhat shakey beginning, the overall effort of the massive response team which was incrementally mobilized on July 21 and 22 resulted in exemplary efforts on behalf of the evacuees both in terms of their evacuation and ultimate return to their home communities.

October 19, 1989

(Updated: November 28, 1989)

Emergency Social Services STAFF SCHEDULE

	July 24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
0600-1300 Supervisor	Doug Seasmith Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt Ken McDonald	Doug Seasmith Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt Ken McDonald	Doug Seasmith Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt Ken McDonald	Doug Seasmith Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt Ken McDonald	Doug Seasmith Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt	John Gow Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt	Ernie Hasiuk Jim Kowalchuk Gerry Schmidt	
1200-1900 Sup.	John Gow Anne Friesen Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	John Gow Anne Friesen Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	John Gow Anne Friesen Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	John Gow Anne Friesen Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisella Rempel	Nancy Murray Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	Nancy Murray - Anne Friesen Grant Doak Gisela Rempel	18
1800-0100 Supervisor	Ernie Hasiuk Don Pettit Diane Kristjanson Ivan Poitras	Ernie Hasiuk Don Pettit Diane Kristjanson Ivan Poitras	Ernie Hasiuk Don Pettit Diane K Ivan Poitras	Ernie Hasiuk Don Pettit Diane K Ivan Poitras	Ivan Poitras Diane K	Ivan Poitras Diane K	Ivan Poitras Diane K	
0001-0700	Eric Lubosh Seymour Zeidel	Eric Lubosh Seymour Zeidel	Eric Lubosh Seymour Zeidel	Eric Lubosh Seymour Zeidel	Eric Lubosh	Eric Lubosh	Eric Lubosh	
on call					Don Pettit Seymour Zeidel Anne Friesen Ken McDonald	→	→	

APPENDIX "A"

	July 31	August 1	Aug 2	Aug 3	Aug 4	Aug 5	Aug 6	Mon Aug 7
Supervisor 0600-1300	Doug Seasmith Gerry Schmidt Ken McDonald	Ernie Hasiuk	John Gow	Doug Gerry Schmidt Seymour Z	Ernie Gerry Schmidt Seymour Z	Gerhard Suss Ken McDonald Seymour Z	Ernie Hasiuk Ken McDonald Seymour Z	Doug Seasmith
1200-1900	Grant Doak Nancy Murray	Grant Doak Nancy M	Grant Doak Nancy M	Grant Doak Anne Friesen	Grant Doak Anne F.	Ivan P. Anne F	Ivan P. Anne F.	
1800-0100	Ivan Poitras	Ivan P.	Ivan P.	Eric Lubosh	Eric Lubosh	Eric Lubosh		Tues Aug 7
0001-0700	Diane Kristj Eric Lubosh	Don Pettit Eric Lubosh	Diane K Eric L	Diane K on Call	Diane K on call	Grant Doak on call		Doug S. Ken McD
On Call	Anne Friesen Seymor Zeidel	Anne F Seymour Z	Anne F Seymour Z.					Ivan P. (0600-1800)
Additional -	Gisela Rempel	Gisela Rempel	Gisela Rempel	Sid Frankel	Sid Frankel			

APPENDIX "D"

Manitoba

Memorandum

Date: September 27, 1989

To: Emergency Social Services
Services Supervisors
J. Gow — D. Sexsmith
E. Hasiuk — G. Suss

From: G. Doak
S. Frankel
A. Friesen
J. Kowalchuk
D. Pettit
Emergency Social Services Staff

Telephone:

Subject: EVALUATION OF EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES FUNCTIONING DURING RECENT EMERGENCY

We are writing to recommend that an evaluation of the functioning of emergency social services during the recent emergency should be carried out.

We would further suggest that this evaluation should include input from the staff of emergency social services.

The proposed evaluation could address such issues as:

1) the need for an emergency social services procedure manual. ✓

2) the need for an operational statement of the role of emergency social services, and how it relates to the roles of emergency health services, the Emergency Measures Organization, the Red Cross, the City of Winnipeg Social Services Department, and other relevant social service organizations.

3) the advantages and disadvantages of operational integration and/or co-location of emergency social services, emergency health services, the Emergency Measures Organization and other emergency service organizations.

4) methods for improving co-ordination between emergency social services and the City of Winnipeg Social Services Department.

5) preparatory training of staff who will be involved in emergency social services. ✓

6) clarification as to the conditions under which material assistance is offered as social assistance for persons in need as opposed to universal grants to all evacuees.

7) clarification of policy regarding the circumstances under which evacuees should be moved between locations.

8) clarification of rules, procedures and decision-making processes for community re-entry.

9) review of length of shifts of emergency social services and other emergency service personnel to ensure that staff effectiveness is not compromised by long working hours.

RECEIVED
SEP 29 1989
COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES

MANITOBA ENVIRONMENT
POST-EMERGENCY REPORT
NORTHERN MANITOBA FOREST FIRE SITUATION
JULY 24 - AUGUST 3, 1989

BACKGROUND

Concerns had been raised in communities affected by smoke from forest fires burning in Northern Manitoba. In many cases, communities had been partially or totally evacuated due to the proximity of fire threats, or heavy smoke conditions.

In response to requests from various agencies, including the Emergency Measures Organization, Manitoba Environment performed air quality assessments in various settlements, to advise EMO and local officials on conditions present during smoke events, and localized health effects which may be present. Air quality monitoring was also performed during the survey, to provide actual measurements of conditions present (see Appendix A for methodology and results).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Manitoba Environment operates an Emergency Response Team, providing response to environmental emergencies on a 24 hour basis. In most cases, incidents handled involve chemical spill mitigation within the province. In some cases, the department is asked to respond to issues of environmental concern which may not involve a spill situation, but requires specialized support. In this case, the issue was related to air quality in settlements affected by smoke, and was dealt with through the Air Standards and Studies section of Environment.

CHRONOLOGY

July 24

Contact initiated with Manitoba Environment (M. Morelli) by John Ashton, INCO, Thompson regarding smoke from forest fire in city. Request for advice on air quality monitoring, and ambient air guidelines. John Ashton placed in contact with Mark Szkolnicki, Air Standards and Studies section.

July 25

Contact maintained with John Ashton, monitoring Carbon Monoxide levels in Thompson. Contact initiated by Bev Rutherford, Manitoba Health, at Thompson Emergency Operations Centre with Mark Szkolnicki in Winnipeg, regarding information on health effects of smoke in air, and assessment procedures for determination of air quality. Information provided via FAX to Thompson EOC.

Heavy smoke presence throughout Northern Manitoba on this date (black sky at 3:00 P.M. in Thompson).

July 26

Contact maintained with Ashton and Rutherford, regarding air quality situation in Thompson. Teleconference held with Rutherford, to determine course of action regarding perceived health effects from smoke in air. Determination made to issue public service announcements based upon modified air quality indices. Information sent by FAX to Thompson EOC.

July 27

Request made by Thompson Emergency Operations Group for Szkolnicki to fly into Thompson as air quality advisor to Re-entry committee.

July 28

Szkolnicki diverted from Thompson to Oxford House by Winnipeg Emergency Operations Group on priority basis to deal with issue of air quality degradation in the community, with representatives of Health and Welfare Canada and Indian Affairs. Air quality monitoring performed in community in evening of July 28 and morning of July 29.

July 29

Szkolnicki arrives in Thompson, to meet with Re-entry committee. Plan of action developed to deal with issue of air quality health effects within evacuated communities.

July 30

"Smoke" checks performed in communities of Split Lake, York Landing, and Ilford.

July 31

"Smoke" checks performed in communities of Shamatawa, God's River, and God's Lake Narrows

August 1

"Smoke" checks performed in communities of St. Theresa's Point, Wasagamach, and Garden Hill.

August 2

"Smoke" check performed in community of Red Sucker Lake.

August 3

"Smoke" check performed in community of South Indian Lake. Emergency operations at Thompson Emergency Operations Centre terminated, this date. Szkolnicki returns to Winnipeg.

EMERGENCY COSTS

See Appendix B

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the evacuations which occured during the summer forest fire situation were based on perceived health effects from smoke conditions present in the communities. Air quality has never been a concern during previous fire incidents, and the government was unprepared, in this instance, to deal with the issue. Considering the heightened profile of environmental matters in the media, and with the public, it is anticipated that this issue will become of concern in future incidents, as well.

To better prepare for this issue, it is recommended that the following procedures be carried out:

1) Establishment of clear policies / guidelines regarding evacuations due to smoke conditions, in concert with representation from the provincial departments of Health and Environment, Emergency Measures Organization, and federal agencies, if appropriate.

2) Establishment of standard information packages (paper, audio / visual) for dissemination during smoke incidents, describing health effects, and methods of alleviating these effects. Specific information should be prepared for the following target groups:.

    1) General public
    2) Health officials, all levels
    3) Emergency officers involved in planning and implementation of evacuation efforts.

3) Examination of need and requirement for establishment of Task Group which may be deployed into communities affected by smoke, to make on-site determinations of severity of effects from smoke in area.

APPENDIX A

AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT REPORTS

AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT REPORT
FOREST FIRE SITUATION - NORTHERN MANITOBA
JULY 28 - AUGUST 3, 1989

BACKGROUND

Concerns have been raised in communities affected by smoke from forest fires burning in Northern Manitoba. In many cases, communities had been totally or partially evacuated due to the proximity of fire threats, or heavy smoke conditions.

In response to requests from the Emergency Measures Organization, air quality assessments were performed in various settlements, to advise EMO, and local community officials, on conditions present during smoke events, and localized health effects which may be present. Air quality monitoring was also performed during the survey, to provide actual measurements of conditions present.

METHODOLOGY

Air quality assessments were performed based upon both objective and subjective criteria. All factors regarding the smoke situation in the community were taken into account during the assessment procedure.

Each survey began with an interview of local officials, discussing the situation that had occured, to determine where fires were burning relative to the settlement, and their distances from the location. Determinations were made of the number of citizens evacuated from the community, including the number that were removed due to chronic medical disorder, or infirmity. A discussion was held regarding how much smoke was being observed, and when (i.e. during the entire day or only at night). The assessment also included input from local community health staff, regarding the human symptoms associated with the presence of smoke, and the severity of the complaints.

After data was gathered, information was given to the groups, explaining the effects observed from exposure to various types of air pollutants (eg. dust, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, etc.), and the nature of an inversion condition (one of the most common meteorological effects causing the presence of lingering smoke). This was done in an attempt to demystify the problems affecting the settlement. An explanation was given regarding the type of monitoring to be performed, and what the readings mean. Throughout the session, people were encouraged to participate and ask questions, to eliminate misunderstandings.

Monitoring for Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), and Ozone was performed during the survey. Several monitoring sites were chosen within the communities, and, in certain cases, at external sites where citizens thought more smoke was present. In all cases, members of the community were allowed to observe the monitoring process, and to see the results as readings were taken.

METHODOLOGY cont'd

After monitoring was completed, a second meeting was held, to discuss the results, and to provide advice regarding the smoke conditions, and the possibility of returning evacuated residents to the community, if this was an issue. It was always stressed that the decision to return people to the settlement was up to local officials and the Emergency Measures Organization, not the assessor, and involved many other factors besides the air quality in the area.

RESULTS

Assessments were performed in 11 communities that were entirely or partially evacuated due to proximity of fires, or smoke in the area. These were as follows, in the order the assessments were performed:

a) Oxford House
b) Split Lake
c) York Landing
d) Ilford
e) Shamatawa
f) God's River
g) God's Lake Narrows
h) St. Teresa's Point / Wasagamach
i) Garden Hill
j) Red Sucker Lake
k) South Indian Lake

A separate assessment for each community is attached on the following pages.

OXFORD HOUSE

Assessment Date: July 28 - 29, 1989

Oxford House was the first settlement visited. Approximately 600 residents had been evacuated, due to fires burning south of the community. The nearest fire was being held at a location 18 miles from the town. Upon arrival at 9:00 P.M., July 28, an inversion condition was present at approximately 4000 feet, holding smoke close to the ground, causing visibility at the surface to be reduced to 1 - 2 miles. Readings taken at 12:00 A. M., and 1:30 A. M., on July 29 indicated that Carbon Monoxide was present at levels which may be considered near background (0.5 - 1.0 parts per million), while no detectable concentrations of Nitrogen Oxides or Ozone were present.

By the morning, the inversion layer had broken up, with clear conditions present throughout the day. Readings taken at 7:00 A. M. and 8:00 A. M. in the town were found to be similar to those taken in the early morning.

In order to establish whether reading would change significantly as visibility was reduced, we travelled to the site of the fire closest to the community. As smoke presence increased, a correlation was established between the decrease in visibility and the elevation of carbon monoxide levels. No increase in carbon monoxide was detected until visibility decreased to approximately 1 mile, based upon subjective assessment. At this time, readings of 2 - 3 ppm were obtained on the monitor.

As visibility became more obscured, levels of carbon monoxide were found to increase, until, under heavy smoke conditions (visibility less than 200 feet), a maximum reading of 10 - 12 ppm was obtained. While being elevated in relation to background concentrations, this reading was still below the maximum tolerable level for an eight hour period of 15 ppm, as set out in the Manitoba Ambient Air Quality Guidelines. This level is a time based concentration beyond which, due to a minimum margin of safety, appropriate action is required to protect the general population. Levels for Nitrogen Oxides and Ozone were below detectable concentrations in all cases.

As a result of the presence of clear conditions in community during the assessment period, air quality in Oxford House was rated as GOOD. However, the continued potential for smoke in the community led to a recommendation that healthy individuals may be allowed back into the community, but sensitive residents (lung / heart disorders, infirmities, and young children) should remain evacuated.

SPLIT LAKE

Assessment Date: July 30, 1989

Approximately 1100 people were evacuated from this community. A major fire near the Kelsey generating station, 30 miles southwest of the town was the major contributor to smoke conditions in the vicinity. Upon arrival in the community at 9:00 A. M., heavy smoke was present, with visibility of approximately 1/4 of a mile, due to a surface inversion in the evening, and calm conditions. By 10:00 A. M., the boundary layer of the inversion had broken, and clear conditions were present in the community.

From discussions with community health officials, it was determined that a variety of short term complaints were observed during the smoke incidents, ranging from shortness of breath to burning eyes and headaches. In all cases, the problems were alleviated when the smoke cleared.

Monitoring performed at two locations (Eversick road and Band Council office) within the community indicated that carbon monoxide was present at near background concentrations (1 ppm), and all other parameters were present at non-detectable levels.

Based upon contaminant levels measured, air quality was rated as GOOD. However, due to heavy smoke conditions, it was determined that sensitive individuals should not be allowed back into the community. It was felt that healthy individuals could return to the town, although some short term discomfort would be felt from the smoke presence.

YORK LANDING

Assessment Date: July 30, 1989

Approximately 250 people were evacuated from this settlement. From discussions with local residents, it was determined that two fires were affecting the community, both located south of the town (Monk Siding - 15 miles southeast, Kelsey fire - 30 miles south). Conditions were clear and sunny when the assessment was performed, with a smoke haze partially obscuring visibility (4 - 5 miles). For the previous few days, surface inversions conditions were reported in the evening hours, breaking up by late morning. Symptoms observed while smoke was present in the air were similar to those reported in Split Lake, with headaches and dry throats being the major complaints. Discussions with local nursing staff indicated that very few complaints were being brought to their attention, and those that were could be attributed to short term effects of exposure to the smoke.

Monitoring was performed at 4 sites both within and outside the community. These are listed below:

Band office:	Carbon Monoxide - 1.0 ppm Nitrogen Oxides - not detected Ozone - not detected
Ripple Falls:	Carbon Monoxide - 1.5 ppm Nitrogen Oxides - not detected Ozone - not detected Visibility - 1.5 - 2.0 miles
Split Lake : Ferry turnoff	Carbon Monoxide - 1.5 ppm
Aiken River,: near Hydro right of way	Carbon Monoxide - 2.5 ppm Visibility - 1.0 - 1.5 miles

From readings taken at the site, the air quality at York Landing was rated as GOOD. However, it was thought that continued presence of smoke in the vicinity in the evenings might cause problems with sensitive individuals (respiratory / heart disorders, elderly and infirm, young children). Therefore, the advice was given that healthy residents may be allowed back, but sensitive individuals should probably remain out of the community until heavy smoke conditions subside.

ILFORD

Assessment Date: July 30, 1989

Most of the residents of this community were evacuated due to fires burning in the vicinity. On the day that the assessment was performed, skies were clear, with a smoke haze partially obscuring visibility (3 - 4 miles). Ilford was being used as a staging area for fire suppression in the area.

From discussions with essential personnel still left in the community, it was determined that surface inversions, coupled with heat from nearby fires, were contributing to smoke observed in the town, especially in the evening hours. Some minor complaints of coughing and headaches were reported.

Monitoring performed at two locations in the community (no description available) found carbon monoxide levels to be present at background levels (1.0 ppm), with no detectable levels of the other pollutants examined.

Based upon readings in the community, air quality was rated as GOOD. It was advised, however, that sensitive individuals (lung / heart disorders, elderly and infirm, young children) should probably be excluded from consideration for reentry, due to the continued potential for smoke presence in Ilford.

SHAMATAWA

Assessment Date: July 31, 1989

Approximately 300 citizens were evacuated from the community. Fires were burning in a number of locations, at distances of 4 to 15 miles from the town. On the day of the assessment, a smoke haze was found to partially obscure visibility (2 - 3 miles).

Discussions with local nurses and officials indicated that some short term complaints related to the smoke condition had been observed in the community, with reports of headaches, tightness in the chest, coughing and some nosebleeds in children. None of the complaints required extended medical attention, and were found to be alleviated after the smoke disappeared.

Monitoring was performed at two sites within the community (band council office, nursing station), and at one site approximately five miles west by road. In all cases, carbon monoxide levels were found at near background concentrations (0.5 ppm - 1.0 ppm), with no detectable levels of the other pollutants examined.

From the monitoring performed in the community, air quality in the vicinity was rated as GOOD. However, due to the continued potential for smoke infiltration from fires in the area, officials from EMO and the town were advised to consider limiting reentry of sensitive individuals into the community, although healthy residents could return to their homes.

GOD'S RIVER

Assessment Date: July 31, 1989

Approximately 300 residents were evacuated from the community. On the date of the assessment, conditions were clear, with no trace of smoke in the vicinity. No major fires were burning within 30 - 40 miles of the site.

From discussions with remaining residents, conditions had been clear for 2 days, although heavy smoke had been present earlier in the week. No physical complaints were reported related to smoke presence in air.

Air monitoring performed at one site in the community confirmed that all pollutants examined were present at near background concentrations.

Based upon conditions present in the settlement, EMO was advised that air quality in the community was good, and that reentry for local residents could commence, without restriction.

GOD'S LAKE NARROWS

Assessment Date: July 31, 1989

Approximately 400 residents were evacuated from this settlement. The area was being affected by two fires, one burning 12 miles southwest and another 10 miles south of the town. Conditions had remained fairly clear during the previous two days, with a smoke haze partially obscuring visibility (3 - 4 miles). Surface inversion conditions in the evening hours, however, had fumigated the area, with associated visibility problems, and some reports to local nursing staff of headaches, dry throats, chest tightness, and nosebleeds in children. None of the complaints were of a serious nature.

Monitoring was performed at 10 sites both within the town, and in the vicinity. In all cases, measurements taken for Nitrogen Oxides and Ozone were below detectable limits. Carbon Monoxide concentrations were as follows:

Band Office	- 0.5 ppm
#6 Water Stand Pipe	- 0.5 ppm
South End of Reserve	- 1.0 ppm
School Pumphouse	- 1.0 ppm
The Narrows	- 0.5 ppm
Northeast Causeway	- 1.0 ppm
North side of Reserve	- 1.0 ppm
West side of Reserve	- 1.0 ppm
Near west side causeway	- 1.0 - 1.5 ppm
Reef - west side of Reserve	- 1.0 ppm

Based upon conditions in the community, air quality during the assessment period was rated as GOOD. However, due to the presence of smoke in the evening hours from inversion conditions, the band council and EMO were advised to consider limiting reentry to healthy members of the community until smoke conditions cleared.

ST. TERESA'S POINT / WASAGAMACH

Assessment Date: August 1, 1989

Approximately 600 people were evacuated from this two communites. Fires were burning 5 miles southwest, and 20 miles west (Cantin Lake-Lynx Lake) of the settlements. On the day that St. Teresa's Point was visited, skies were clear, with a slight haze on Island Lake (visibility 3-4 miles). Inversions on previous evenings had resulted in obscured visibility, and fumigation of the area, with complaints of headaches, coughing, and dry throats.

Monitoring was performed at the band council office, and at a number of sites on Island Lake. In all cases carbon monoxide readings were at or near background levels (one part per million or less). Measurements taken for Oxides of Nitrogen and Ozone were all below detectable limits.

Based upon observed conditions within the community, air quality was listed as GOOD. Because of the proximity of Wasagamach to St. Teresa's Point, it was felt that the assessment at St. Theresa could apply to Wasagamach as well. However, both EMO and the Band Councils were advised that re-entry should be limited to healthy individuals only, as smoke presence in the evening would have adverse effects on the sensitive individuals in the area.

GARDEN HILL

Assessment Date: August 1, 1989

Approximately 1000 people were evacuated from this settlement. Fires at Sawmill Rapids (12 miles away) and Cantin Lake (west 20 miles) had caused smoke conditions in the community. On the day the settlement was visited, conditions were clear, with a slight haze (visibility 5-6 miles). Surface inversions on previous evenings, coupled with light winds, had caused obscured visibility and fumigation, with reports of headaches, coughing, and dry throats. No serious medical complaints were recorded.

Air quality measurements were performed at 5 locations in the vicinity of the community. In all cases, levels of Carbon Monoxide were found to be near background concentrations (one part per million or less), while levels of Oxides of Nitrogen and Ozone were below detectable concentrations.

Based upon measurements taken within the community, and observed conditions, air quality was rated as GOOD. However, due to the continued presence of smoke in the evening hours, both the band council, and EMO were advised to limit first re-entry to healthy individuals only.

RED SUCKER LAKE

Assessment Date: August 2, 1989

Approximately 300 people were evacuated from this settlement. due to smoke from fires burning near the community. Conditions had remained relatively clear for the two days previous to the assessment date, although surface inversions during the evenings had caused some smoke presence in the evenings. Complaints in this settlement during the smoke presence were similar to those reported in the other communities visited.

Air quality measurements taken in four areas in the settlement indicated that Carbon Monoxide levels were near background levels, while all other parameters were at non-detectable concentrations.

Based upon measurements taken in the community, and observed conditions, air quality in the community was rated as GOOD. However, due to the continued presence of smoke in the vicinity, in the evening hours, both EMO and the Band Council were advised to limit reentry to healthy individuals only.

SOUTH INDIAN LAKE

Assessment Date: August 3, 1989

Evacuations in this community were limited to Medical evacuations and older citizens only. Smoke presence in this community was related to forest fires burning up to 20 miles from the community, and surface inversions in the evening hours. On the day the settlement was visited, a smoke haze limited visibility to 3-4 miles in smoke.

Most activity in this community was related to providing information on the smoke conditions, and related health effects. One reading taken for Carbon Monoxide near the recreation centre indicated a concentration of 1.5 ppm. No reading for other paramenters were taken.

APPENDIX B

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

MANITOBA ENVIRONMENT
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY
FOREST FIRE MONITORING
JULY 28 - AUGUST 4, 1989

A. TRAVEL	-	$12,000.00
- Majority of costs related to air transport into affected communities.		
B. ACCOMODATION / EXPENSES	-	$ 400.00
C. PERSONNEL COSTS (overtime)	-	$ 1,500.00
D. EQUIPMENT COSTS		$ 100.00
ESTIMATED COST		$14,000.00

Manitoba

Labour

Fire Commissioner
Field Services

1360 St. Matthews Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
R3G 0K6

ESTIMATE OF REPAIR COSTS

MINI:

Replace Battery and Clamps	$ 75.00	
Rebuild Portable Pump	300.00	
Tune-up and filters	400.00	$ 775.00

PUMPER I:

Repair Pump Heater Hoses	$ 100.00	
Repair Exhaust System	200.00	
Check transmission - slipping	50.00	
Flush cooling system and replace antifreeze	75.00	
Replace fitting on portable pump	75.00	
Tune up and all filters	400.00	
Check pump for damage (Gravel)	--	900.00

THOMPSON:

Repair Portable Radio (VHF)	$ 150.00	
Damaged: 2-1/2 in Hose x 2	700.00	
Lost : 2-1/2 in Hose x 2	700.00	
Lost : 2-1/2 in Nozzle	600.00	2,150.00
	TOTAL	$3,825.00

vvvvvvvvv

CH/mcb jma emo and forest fires
89 08 08

MILEAGE

PUMPER #2:

July 21/89	Brandon to The Pas	580 Km.	
July 23/89	The Pas to Norway House	420 Km.	
		1000 Km x .50	$ 500.00

TOM'S VAN:

July 24/89	Norway House to Winnipeg	750 Km x .50	375.00

BLAZER:

July 29/89	Winnipeg to Cross Lake	716 Km.	
July 30	Cross Lake Area	50 Km.	
July 31	Cross Lake Area	50 Km.	
Aug. 01	Cross Lake to Thompson	256 Km.	
Aug. 03	Thompson to Winnipeg	750 Km.	
Aug. 04	Winnipeg to Thompson	750 Km.	
		2,572 Km x .50	1,286.00

MINI:

July 24/89	Waterhen to Cross Lake	576 Km.	
July 30	Cross Lake to Norway House	108 Km.	
		684 Km x .50	342.00

PUMPER #1:

July 30/89	Cross Lake Area	50 Km.	
July 31	Cross Lake Area .....50 Km.		
Aug. 1st	Cross Lake to Thompson	256 Km.	
Aug. 3rd	Thompson to Winnipeg	750 Km.	
		1,106 Km.x.50	553.00
		TOTAL	$3,056.00

1360 ST. MATTHEWS

ESTIMATED WAGES, OVERTIME AND EXPENSES

	Regular Hours		Overtime	Total Hours	Total
1. Hogarth, Colin	40.25	+	145.75	186 Hours	$ 3,576.77
				Expenses	208.20
					$ 3,784.97
2. Jennings, Tom			132.15		2,744.19
3. Matheson, J. R.			12		268.92
4.. Popowich, Doug			51.75		1,073.81
5. Wright, R. F.			115		2,386.25
6. McKernan, Jerry			66.75		1,332.33
				TOTAL	$11,590.47

JRM/mcb jma emo and forest fires

MANITOBA FIRE COLLEGE EVACUEES

FIRE COLLEGE STAFF	DATE	REGULAR HOURS	OVERTIME HOURS
Brenda Popko	July 24	7.25 hrs.	10.5 hrs.
	July 25	7.25 hrs.	12.5 hrs.
	July 26	7.25 hrs.	2.5 hrs.
	July 27	7.25 hrs.	8.5 hrs.
	July 28	7.25 hrs.	9 hrs.
	July 29	********	5 hrs.
	July 31	********	7.5 hrs.
		Total: $485.00	Total: $1,154.19
Allan Guest	July 26	7.25 hrs.	5 hrs.
	July 27	7.25 hrs.	********
	July 30	********	12 hrs.
	August 1	********	7 hrs.
		Total: $324.94	Total: $941.22
Janyce Beswitherick	July 26	7.25 hrs.	5 hrs.
	July 27	7.25 hrs.	********
	July 28	7.25 hrs.	********
	July 29	********	7.25 hrs.
	August 2	********	6 hrs.
		Total: $264.69	Total: $377.27
Ted Moore	July 25	********	5 hrs.
	July 26	7.25 hrs.	********
		Total: $150.43	Total: $155.62

Final Total: $3,853.36

BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND DAMAGE

This estimate does not include maintenance or damage to the Manitoba Fire College facility in Brandon. It is difficult to determine how much or what kind of damage has been done (e.g. dirty carpets, walls, etc.) until the conclusion of this incident.

		$3,853.36
Plus:	Gail Martin	220.75
	Darlene Ashley	800.00
	Total	$4,874.11
		vvvvvvvvv

89/08/03

FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Estimated cost, engines, equipment and personnel.

The following is an estimated "ball-park" cost for the use of our Fire Engines (2), 4 x 4 (1), and two (2) minivans; as well as the replacement maintenance and repair of the equipment carried on these engines.

Also, the personnel cost in regular time as well as all the overtime todate related to fighting the fires.

ENGINE AND UNIT DISPLACEMENT COST:

Engine #1	- 1710 Km at .25.....=$	427.50
Engine #2	- 1710 Km at .25.....=	427.50
Unit #7 (4x4)	- 1710 Km at .25.....=	427.50
Minivan (Tom)	- 1710 Km at .25.....=	427.50
Minivan (Dick)	- 1710 Km at .25.....=	427.50
	TOTAL	$2,137.50

ENGINE AND UNIT MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR COSTS:

Engine #1

Maintenance	- $150 x 2 .....=	300.00
Clean-up & inspections.....=		250.00
Gauge calibration and valve replacement.....=		1,000.00
Compartment mat replacement.....=		250.00
	TOTAL	$1,800.00

Engine #2

Maintenance	- $150 x 2.....=	300.00
Clean-up & inspections.....=		250.00
Gauge calibration and valve replacement.....=		1,500.00
	TOTAL	$2,050.00

Unit #7 (4x4)

Maintenance and repair.....=		169.91
Clean-up.....=		50.00
Windshield and replacement.....=		350.00
	TOTAL	$ 569.91

Minivan (Tom)

Maintenance.....=		100.00
Clean-up.....=		50.00
	TOTAL	$ 150.00

Minivan (Dick)

Maintenance.....	=	$100.00
Clean-up.....	=	50.00
	TOTAL	$ 150.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR VEHICLES.....$6,857.11

EQUIPMENT:

During an emergency such as the one we are dealing with at present, equipment gets damaged and lost. As well, maintenance inspections must be performed on each piece to put them back into service, each associated with cost.

A. REPLACEMENT COST DUE TO LOSS OR DAMAGE:

12 x 15M length of 65 mm hose (rubber) $242.00 ea.	=	$ 2,904.00
14 x 15M length of 65 mm hose w/double jacket cotton $181.00 ea.	=	2,534.00
2 x 30M length of 100 mm rubber hose	=	1,278.00
2 x hose keys $11.50 ea.	=	23.00
1 x gated wye 65mm to 2 x 38mm	=	247.00
1 x 130mm double jacket soft suction fire hose 6.39 a foot	=	159.75
1 x K12 rotary saw	=	1,500.00
3 x nozzle repair kits	=	450.00
1 x 300' of 5/8" kernmantle rope .87 per foot	=	261.00
1 x fire axe	=	31.00
1 x explosion proof flashlight	=	11.25
TOTAL		$ 9,399.00

B. INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE COST of equipment such as portable pumps, coupling repairs, valve repairs etc. = 500.00

The total cost associated to the equipment as a ball-park figure will be approximately $ 9,899.00

PERSONNEL

The total cost in salaries for the Brandon Personnel, associated with fire fighting only, is $12,754.74 and is broken down as follows:

Regular hours	= $4,151.26
Time and a half	= 3,731.92
Double Time	= 4,871.56
TOTAL	$12,754.74

The total estimated cost with the information available today is as follows:

Vehicles	=	$6,857.11
Equipment	=	9,899.00
Personnel	=	12,754.74
GRAND TOTAL		$29,510.85

Jean Paul Lebel

JEAN-PAUL LEBEL
Assistant Fire Commissioner

POST EMERGENCY REPORT

FIREWATCH

1. **GENERAL**

This report generally covers the Department of Highways and Transportation response to the forest fire conditions in Manitoba in 1989.

2. **EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION**

The organizational structure of the Department remained the same as that which responded to the flood situation. The one exception was Government Air/Radio, which acted in direct support of the Department of Natural Resources.

3. **SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

a. May 12, 1989 attended first Central Task Team Meeting on forest fire situation in Manitoba. Informed that PR #304 blocked at Pine Falls and Bissett, restricting travel to Manigotagan. Also informed that town of Ashern in danger and eleven homes already burned. The following road closures were reported:

1. PTH 6 - Camper to Ashern
2. PR 325 - Ashern to Hodgson
3. PR 325 - PR 274 to 6 km west of 324
4. PR 513 - PTH 6 to Dauphin River
5. PR 325 - West of PTH 6 to PTH 68
6. PR 304 - Broadlands to Caribou Lake

b. District forces from Ashern and Fisher Branch actively engaged in fire fighting and traffic control. Men have been given first aid refresher courses.

c. May 15, 1989 attended second CTT meeting for an update on worsening fire situation. District forces in Ashern, Manigotagan, Swan River and Pine Falls area all involved in fighting fires. EMO coordinator advised that road closure information being passed to the media but not to Highways Road Information Desk. Natural Resources to correct flow of information to include Road Information Desk on priority basis.

4. **EMERGENCY COSTS**

See Annex A.

5. **COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Nil.

6. The Department of Highways and Transportation was again in position to respond to the emergency. District forces were heavily engaged in the Ashern, Manigotagan and Swan River areas. The Department was able to loan equipment and men and in some cases arranged for the hire of supplementary equipment.

JUNE 12, 1989
AF/FIREWATCH
M.100.20

ANNEX A

FIREWATCH

EXPENSES

Accounts Collectable - Department of Northern Affairs

District	Expenses
01	$15,556.94
02	Nil
06	118.16
08	1,362.00
09	20,000.00
11	27,444.00
TOTAL	$64,481.10

JUNE 14,1989
AF/FIREWATCH
M.100.20

POST EMERGENCY REPORT

FIREWATCH 1989

1. GENERAL

This report is an addendum to the Firewatch Report submitted June 12, 1989.

2. EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

a) The Emergency Response structure of the Department remained the same as that which responds to any emergency. There was however, one change that hindered our response times; the Highways and Transportation Emergency Preparedness Officer was seconded to the Emergency Measures Organization on extremely short notice. He was employed at EMO Headquarters throughout the period of the emergency, leaving no Highways Representative at CMTT.

b) It was evident from the outset of emergency that an aircraft controller was required and that position was filled by Highways and Transportation. During the initial period of the emergency, control of available aircraft resources was not co-ordinated but left to individual organizations to sort out. Within 48 hours, the EMO Operations Centre took control of air resources, scheduling and handling emergency airlift requests. The "Air Desk" operated on a 24 hour, 7 days per week rate for a period of 21 days straight. The pace, to say the least, was gravelling.

c) The co-ordination of airlift requirements between the Winnipeg Operations Centre and Thompson Centre caused some confusion. Both centres were attemptimg to schedule airlifts using the same limited resources available in Manitoba. It took 48 to 72 hours to sort out who should control the resources; Winnipeg or Thompson. The logical choice was Winnipeg.

d) Attempting to secure sufficient aircraft to conduct emergency airlifts proved frustrating for the following reasons:

(1) Northern airfields are all gravel strips are too short for modern aircraft.
(2) There is a limited number of aircraft in Manitoba capable of using gravel airstrips.
(3) Up-to-date aircraft information was not readily available. The situation was rectified when Joan Saj of our Air Division was added to our staff.

3. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

No comment

4. EMERGENCY COSTS

See Annex A

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a) The Department of Highways and Transportation was in position to response to the emergency. It was unfortunate that our representative on the CMTT was not replaced after being seconded to EMO. This situation will be rectified when an Assistant Departmental Emergency Preparedness Officer is named.

b) It is recommended that a full time experienced logistics officer be employed by EMO. Logistics play a large role in any emergency and it must be co-ordinated at the highest practical level. For the uninitiated, logistics includes all forms of transportation, supply and finance.

c) It is recommended that an operations centre capable of seating all the "Players" be permenently estaolished. Having three separate offices operating, as we had, was extremely confusing and inefficient. An up-to-date operations map - properly maintained - could also help immensly.

ANNEX A TO
FIREWATCH II

ACCOUNTS COLLECTABLE - DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENGINEERING DISTRICT	ACTIVITY	COSTS
No. 01	Wages, Vehicles, Chemicals, Equipment, Expenses	$21,920:39
No. 08	Signing, Equipment and Overhead Expenses	$ 1,533:01
No. 09	Wages, Equipment, Chemicals Vehicles	$32,027:19
No. 10	Machine Rentals	$38,000:00
	Engineering	$ 3,400:00
	Material	$ 2,600:00
	Expenses	$ 3,000:00
	Wages	$56,000:00
	TOTAL	$103,000:00
No. 11	Equipment, Vehicles, Wages, Rentals	$ 40,382:11
Mechanical Equipment Services	Equipment, Wages	$ 1,842:07
	TOTAL	$200,704:77

Manitoba

Memorandum

Date: October 30, 1989

To: Sydney Reimer
Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board
101 - 800 Portage Ave.

From: Al Ford
Emergency Preparedness Officer
12th Floor, 215 Garry Street

Subject: POST-DISASTER REVIEW OF THE FIRE EMERGENCY IN MANITOBA

Telephone: 945-3894

On October 19, 1989, the Emergency Measures Organization conducted a comprehensive review of the Governments' response to the fire emergency. All Government Departments involved in the emergency provided their assessment of how their respective Departments reacted to the emergency. The presentations made by each Department included "What went right and what could be improved upon". It is assumed that minutes of the meeting will be available and therefore provide answers to any questions posed by the Cabinet.

This Department's assessment of our reaction to the emergency is very positive. The Department was able to meet all of its commitments, was not unduly tasked and found intra-departmental co-operation exceedingly positive.

There were several points that came to light during the handling of the emergency that are worthy of consideration for improving an emergency operation in Northern Manitoba.

A. VULNERABILITY

(1) It became very evident early in the emergency, just how vulnerable small northern communities have become. The evacuation of large numbers of people from areas served by rail, road, water and air merely depended on the evacuation plan in place at the time. Those communities that did not have a plan or had never practiced the plan had difficulty getting organized to evacuate. It was only the diligence and hard work of a few that resulted in few losses.

(2) Most northern airports cannot accept modern high capacity aircraft. When it was realized that out-of-province aircraft would be required to augment provincial resources, a Canada wide search turned up only one DASH-7. The main reason for the shortage was that most aircraft operators told us they could not land on gravel airstrips and our airstrips were too short. In one case an operator sited the fact that our strips were too narrow. Had we not had

.../2

PS # 25 894 01 00930

the Air Manitoba and Calm Air fleets of the old Hawker-Sidley Aircraft, the air evacuation would not have been as successful as it was.

B. OPERATION CENTRE

(1) Although the Manitoba Emergency Plan calls for an emergency operation centre to be open in the basement of the Legislature, the decision was made early to use the EMO office at 410 Broadway. The facilities as they presently exist are inadequate to properly accomodate a working headquarters, the size of which includes representatives from at least 6 Departments.

(2) It is suggested that a full scale operations centre be established at 410 Broadway and that it be fully equipped to deal with any emergency. The accomodation can be used on a day-to-day basis by EMO.

It must be re-iterated that governments' response to the emergency was very positive. There are things that can be done better and they depend on individual government departments completion of their emergency preparedness plan. In the event of another emergency it is felt our response will be even more successful than the last one.

Al Ford

AF:ks

MANITOBA GOVERNMENT SERVICES

POST EMERGENCY REPORT

FIRE CRISIS - 1989

A. General

Providing centralized services to support evacuee accommodation and emergency equipment for the Forest Fire Crisis in the Summer of 1989.

B. Emergency Response Organization

1. Daily meetings were attended to get status report on the fire crisis and the strategic planning for the following day.

2. List of emergency equipment was distributed and where it could be located.

3. Listing of staff and emergency telephone numbers with experience and knowledge of the disaster was assembled.

4. A list of "management types" was assembled to act as relief for telephone enquiries from municipalities at the E.M.O. Centre.

5. Secretaries were volunteered to assist if the need arise.

C. Sequence of Events

Friday, July 21st - Manitoba Government Services established a representative in the E.M.O. Office to facilitate the provision of centralized services.

Emergency bedding supplies were borrowed from federal and provincial institutions and sent to City of Winnipeg reception centres.

Arrangements made to get the 50 emergency beds from the Provincial Building in Portage la Prairie.

Saturday, July 22nd - with increasing numbers of evacuations and requests to provide supplies, transportation and telecommunications support, M.G.S. staff from Purchasing, Telecommunications, Material Supply and Workshop were called out.

. . . /2

C. Sequence of Events (Continued)

Purchasing called suppliers at home to open stores and warehouses. Corrections provided a staff member and inmates, who, with M.G.S. staff, loaded and transported goods.

Materials Supply opened the warehouse to provide inventoried goods for reception areas.

Cellular phones were arranged through M.T.S.

City of Winnipeg personnel provided with names of contacts for possible reception facilities in Winnipeg.

Coordinated or directly provided transportation of goods to reception facilities throughout province.

100 beds were moved from Swan River to The Pas with our own staff and vehicles to set up an emergency centre.

Participated in establishment of reception centres at Red River Community College, Brandon Fire College.

Arrangements were made with the Manitoba School for the Deaf and the University of Manitoba to use their facilities if further space was required.

Staff provided housing and food at the Gimli Industrial Park.

Liaised with reception communities to resolve billing concerns.

Finance & Budgets coordinated payment processes for all bills related to the evacuations.

M.G.S. staff participated on the reentry team coordinating all matters relating to the return of people to their home communities.

Inventoried materials post evacuation.

D. Emergency Costs

Costs incurred by the Department were $3,058,154.51.

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E. Comments and Recommendations

The whole operation was well managed and organized.

The only issue that needs to be dealt with is the Federal Government being upset with our moving the beds from Swan River to assist us in dealing with the fire crisis. Their thoughts were that we should have waited for the proper authorization.

Manitoba

Memorandum

Date October 17, 1989

To Fred Zieggel,
Co-ordinator
Emergency Measures Organization
15th Floor, Woodsworth Building

From Dwight MacAulay,
Director
Information Services
Room 29, Leg. Bldg.

Subject **MANITOBA FOREST FIRE EMERGENCY - JULY 1989**

Telephone - 3746

Further to your memo of Sept. 20 requesting comments/observations etc. on the 1989 forest fire emergency, I would like to offer the following information for your consideration.

The Information Services Branch supported the Director of Communications for the Department of Government Services in all areas of media liaison, news releases, news conferences and general information to the public etc. respecting the emergency.

Background:

As the Director of Communications is unable to attend the post-emergency critique, I have taken the liberty of incorporating both of our communication recommendations re: the forest fire emergency. The director (Cindy Stevens) will likely want to add to this overview upon her return.

Comments/Observations:

The efforts of ALL involved in the forest fire emergency of July-August, 1989 was first class and professional.

Special mention must go to the deputy minister of Government Services, and the entire staff of the Emergency Measures Organization.

While the efforts of the forest fire fighters and those on the front-line arranging the evacuations were nothing short of heroic, I have restricted the following comments and observations to the involvement of the Information Services Branch in assisting the Government Services Communications Director during the emergency..

- During the early stages of the emergency it was relatively easy for communications staff in the command centre to grasp the status of the emergency through a series of reports/messages that were placed throughout the room.

However, as the emergency progressed it became more and more difficult to get a quick synopsis of the status of the emergency, due to the demands on those who occupied key positions at the 'round table'.

- The overcrowding of the command centre did little in the early stages of the emergency to streamline communication efforts.

- The close quarters of all in attendance also created a noise problem which hampered obtaining or disseminating information.

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Recommendations:

#1) Prior to an emergency, meet with Manitoba media and ask how EMO can better satisfy their information demands during an emergency.

#2) Develop an advance listing of all departmental communicators who will be called upon to assist the director of communications for EMO in the event of an emergency.

#3) Once an emergency appears imminent, all support communications staff should be called in for a briefing by the director of communications.

#4) Activate the Citizens' Inquiry role in an emergency a.s.a.p. (ie: extended hours and weekends) to divert a large number of the 'general public' calls from EMO.

#5) Have a minimum of two communications staff on hand throughout the day and evening to assist with media calls.

#6) During a pending or actual emergency, the first communications 'shift' should begin at approximately 5 a.m. so as to accommodate the demand by morning radio outlets for information.

#7) Utilize the Information Services toll-free telephone link to all provincial radio outlets as a means of providing up-to-date reports on the state of the emergency.
This service should also be expanded to include reports from Manitoba Natural Resources.

#8) Ensure that news conferences re: the emergency are 'fed' back to staff assisting with media relations.

#9) Subscribe to a media monitoring "clipping" service so that all EMO staff and media support staff are aware of what stories are being written in the local media about the event.

#10) Provide one secretarial support staff for communication efforts.

#11) Have one fax machine, dedicated to communication efforts, to distribute news releases to Winnipeg and rural media.

#12) All news releases issued by EMO communications should (for filing) carry the name of the individual who wrote the news release.

#13) Ensure that communications staff are at the official fire briefings.

#14) Designate a French language spokesperson. Preferably someone with a communications background.

#15) Establish an official spokesperson for EMO separate from the factual/statistical information provided by the communications personnel who support the departmental director of communications.

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Sequence of events involving the Information Services Branch:

- (July 21) Received a call from EMO Communications Director Cindy Stevens alerting me that the services of Information Services might be required due to the forest fire situation.
- (July 22) The Director of EMO Fred Zieggel requested assistance from the branch.
- (July 22 - August 3) assisted the communications director of EMO in whatever capacity was required.
- (July 23) set-up Citizens' Inquiry Service (on an extended hour and weekend shift) to answer the bulk of the public telephone calls that were going to EMO. This was accompanied with a request for the Manitoba media to "publicize" the expanded role of CIS .
- (July 23 - August 4) Citizens Inquiry handled approximately 2,200 requests for information that were directly related to the forest fire emergency.
- (July 23) Assisted director of communciations in requsting communications support from departmental communicators that were directly or indirectly involved with the fire fighting/evacuation initiative.
- (Aug. 1) Began tapering off involvement in forest fire/evacuation media liaison role.
- (Aug. 4) Citizens' Inquiry Service staff were returned to regular working hours.

Costs:

Staff salaries/overtime	$5,000
Telephone costs	$6,000

* The telephone costs were related to news conferences. Ie: Feeding the news conferences to several media outlets throughout Manitoba that would not ordinarily be hooked-up to our services.

All in all - it certainly appeared to be a job very well done.

Congratulations!

Dwight MacAulay
Director

REPORT

EMERGENCY EVACATION - NORTHERN MANITOBA

A. **Thompson Headquarters - July 23-27, 1989.** The Minister declared a general evacatuion of all communites affected by forest fires in Northern Manitoba; communites and Indian Reserves were being evacuated to Thompson, Churchill and Winnipeg.

B. The Department of Rural Development requested to provide administrative assistance at the Thompson evacuation centre to relieve local staff who had been on duty continually since the start of the evacuation. Roger Bouvier, Municipal Services Officer, attended at Thompson from July 23 to July 27, 1989.

C. Received a call from Acting Deputy Director, Fred Butler, on Sunday, July 23, 1989, advising that staff was required immediately in Thompson to assist and relieve City of Thompson administration staff with the coordination of evacuation of Northern communities via Thompson. Local staff, ie., city manager, engineer, Inco staff, had been working continually for a number of days with very little rest. Reported to Air Movement Unit (A.M.U.) Military Air at Winnipeg Airport. Flew to Thompson on Military Air Hercules and reported to manager at City Hall in Thompson at 8:30 p.m. on July 23, 1989.

Introduced to Eric McCormick, City Manager, and updated on events and progress to date. Other government departments represented were: Northern Affairs, Indian Affairs, Social Services, Medical Services, Emergency Measures Organization, (media spokesman, appointed by City of Thompson to update all media on evacuation plans and procedures and to assist public with assistance in obtaining update information), R.C.M.P., Manitoba Telephone System, City Engineer, City Manager and Mayor of Thompson. A representative of all these organizations was present or available at all times. Our department was requested to assist the City Manager with the overall coordination of the evacuation and relieve the City Manager during rest periods.

Headquarters was set up in the council chambers at City Hall in Thompson. Complete privacy was provided for the committee to meet with no outside interruptions from media or public. Media representative provided assistance to public and news media as required. Nine telephones and two fax lines were assigned to the centre, C/W M.T.S. representative to provide emergency repairs and connections. Calls were being received from throughout Canada, U.S.A. and Europe, requesting updated information on the evacuation.

Our committee comprised of four persons, each responsible for a 6-hour period of the day, our department being responsible for the midnight to 6:00 a.m. shift. All shifts overlapped, with each person on our commitee working 12-18 hour days.

All operations were under the capable supervision of the City Manager. Meetings were held twice daily at 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to review all aspects of the evacuation and to obtain a report and update from all government officials and citizen groups, i.e, Indian bands and leaders. All concerns were discussed at length and resolved as necessary.

Our department was able to assist in the preparation of agendas for all meetings, provide up-to-date information on the number of evacuees and remaining numbers, and to assist in any duties requested by the coordinator. Night duty usually meant providing assistance via phone and being prepared for any emergency responsible due to the spread of fire and smoke.

D. Cost incurred by the Department of Rural Development included meals and room for personnel, cab fare and flight back to Winnipeg via commercial airline, and reimbursement of overtime hours (approximately 30 hours time off in lieu of pay). Total cost, excluding overtime, was approximately $575.00.

E. The Department of Rural Development was able to provide assistance when it was most required. Local staff was exhausted at this point and required immediate rest. Departmental personnel was most impressed with supervision provided by the City Manager and his ability to control emergency at peak periods. The City of Thompson was most appreciative with the assistance provided by Rural Development and other departments. (See attached letter). Our department was able to be dismissed from duties once all communities had been evacuated or safe from future danger. All evacuees were returned to their communities on an orderly basis under the supervision of local staff.

Roger Bouvier
M.S.O.

Attachment

December 5, 1989

City of Thompson

City of Thompson, City Hall, 226 Mystery Lake Road, Thompson, Manitoba R8N 1S6 • Phone (204) 778-7033 • Fax (204) 677-4952

July 27, 1989

Roger Bouvier,
Municipal Services Officer,
607-800 Portage Avenue,
Winnipeg, Manitoba.
R3G 0N4

Dear Roger,

When you left our Emergency Operating Centre I really wished that I had had more time to tell you how much I appreciated your sacrificing time at home to come to Thompson to assist us in our time of need. I know that travel away from home is burdensome on family life, but we certainly needed you here. The timing of your arrival was tremendously helpful because it gave us the opportunity to give some key people a much needed rest. Throughout this crisis I found your calm and pleasant spirit a great asset to our Emergency Operating Centre.

No doubt this event will go down in Canadian history as one of the greatest displays of human accomplishment ever witnessed. Because of the efforts of people like you and the thousands of others who gave so freely of themselves, the hardships of many unfortunate people were minimized as much as humanly possible.

If we can ever do the same for you sometime, please feel free to remember that you have made some friends here.

Sincerely,

Eric McCormick

Eric McCormick,
City Manager

/dl

cc - Gerry Forrest
Roger Dennis

MANITOBA HYDRO

POST EMERGENCY REPORT

GENERAL

Severe forest fires brought on by extreme drought conditions in Northern Manitoba in June, July and August of 1989 affected many communities where Manitoba Hydro has plant and property. Although many locations were threatened, major damage was confined to the burn down of a stretch of wood pole transmission line East of the Village of Sherridon.

Many communities served by Manitoba Hydro experienced power interruptions ranging from a few minutes to several hours due to contaminated smoke shorting out power lines.

The worst period for power outages occurred between July 21st and July 25th.

In addition, some microwave sites were threatened that could have affected the operation of the power system. These sites had not been brushed back properly. Although the site are maintained by Manitoba Telephone System, they carry Manitoba Hydro communication, control and protection traffic in addition to normal MTS communications.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Manitoba Hydro has an active presence in most of the communities that were affected by the forest fires and the heavy smoke conditions. The Manager of Northern Operations resides in Thompson and he has the authority to direct resources (equipment, manpower) where required to maintain continuity of electric service to customers and to other Government Departments/Agencies as the need arises.

Should his resources become strained or depleted, he can cali on resources from his Regional office in Selkirk.

The Regional office can call for assistance from two other Regional offices - one located in Brandon and one in Winnipeg.

Control Centres in Winnipeg and in Brandon provide coordination of all activities on a 24-hour basis.

Field personnel in designated areas of the province are on-call and can be contacted by the Control Centres as necessary through the use of an extensive VHF radio network.

During the 1989 forest fires, Manitoba Hydro's involvement was confined to the local areas with coordination of activities and dispersing of resources conducted out of our Northern Operations Department in Thompson.

Central Task Team (CTT) Meetings held in Winnipeg were attended to ensure that EMO was kept informed of Manitoba Hydro's activities and concerns and to ensure that Manitoba Hydro was responding to EMO requests for information or assistance.

SEQEUENCE OF EVENTS

July 21, 1989

- Twenty-seven transmission line wood pole structures burned to the ground on a 115 000 volt line East of Sherridon.

- Numerous operations (ie. transmission lines tripping out) were recorded on the transmission system between Island Falls (in Saskatchewan) and Flin Flon due to contaminated smoke.

- Power outages were experienced at Nelson House, Leaf Rapids, South Indian Lake, Snow Lake and Sherridon.

July 22, 1989

- Fire approaching Island Falls Generating Station raised an evacuation alert for plant staff.

- Operations continued on various power transmission lines North of Grand Rapids and Flin Flon. Power outages of short duration occurred at many locations. South Indian Lake community was without power overnight lasting over 15 hours.

- Precautions were taken at Kelsey Generating Station as heavy smoke infiltrated the area. Staff were placing on alert as fire was reported to be within 10 miles.

July 23, 1989

- Fire guards were built in the Kelsey area to protect property. Trees and houses were watered down.

- Numerous operations were recorded as the Northern transmission system and short power outages were experienced at many communities North of Grand Rapids.

- A four-pole switch structure on a 138 000 volt line in the Suwannee River area was partially burnt.

- Heavy smoke contamination affected the operation of the HVDC system as fires crossed under the power lines North and South of Grand Rapids.

July 24, 1989

- Fires under the 138 000 volt lines near Kelsey caused many operations on the transmission system. Staff from the plant were kept busy suppressing fires around the property with portable pumps, a grader and a front end loader.

- Preparations were being made by SaskPower to shut down the Island Falls plant and to evacuate all staff.

July 25, 1989

- Rain at Island Falls caused SaskPower to cancel the planning evacuation of the plant.

- Operations were recorded on the 138 000 volt transmission system between Kelsey and Thompson as fires crossed under the lines.

July 26, 1989

- Four pole structure damaged by forest fires on the 138 000 volt line supplying Ruttan Lake/Leaf Rapids area was repaired.

July 27, 1989

- Manitoba Telephone System reported that a fire at Three Sisters Lake threatened a microwave site. These microwave sites carry all the control traffic for the HVDC power system. Fire will be actioned by Natural Resources.

July 28, 1989

- Problems experienced getting fuel past Thompson (due to RCMP road block) for Limestone construction site. Critical work in jeopardy if fuel can't get through.

July 29, 1989

- Fuel problem for Limestone resolved with Thompson RCMP through the Central Task Team.

- Arrangements also made to get key personnel back into work sites for operating, maintenance and construction purposes. Many people had been stranded out when smoke and fires forced travel restrictions.

August 1, 1989

- Forest fires crossing under the HVDC power lines in the Bulger Lake area caused two operations.

August 2, 1989

- Several more operations were recorded on the HVDC system due to fires in the Bulger Lake area.

EMERGENCY COSTS

The following is a breakdown of costs associated with the forest fire disaster in Northern Manitoba in July 1989:

a) Costs incurred during the emergency:

i) Labour costs for fire related activities (equipment operators to maintain fire lines, man barricades, fight fires, provide assistance to fire crews, etc:

$101 630.00

ii) Miscellaneous equipment and materials:

$ 4 700.00

iii) Transportation, meals, accommodation (includes costs for Cross Lake evacuees at Jenpeg):

$ 7 170.00

iv) Lost production (wages for staff evacuated or stranded out):

$ 19 913.00

b) Estimated clean up costs:

i) Labour and material to repair damaged structures (poles) and insulators:

$219 500.00

There may be more damage as one affected transmission line East of Sherridon has not yet been repaired.

Total estimated costs (a) plus (b) above:

$352 913.00

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Comments

Manitoba Hydro became quite involved in the forest fire disaster of summer 1989 by:

- Cooperating with Natural Resources in use of Manitoba Hydro heavy equipment and manpower to maintain fire lines.
- Accommodating Cross Lake residents at Jenpeg and others at Kelsey staff houses.
- Manning barricades and fire guards.
- Fighting fires that threatened property.
- Restoring power to communities experiencing power failures.
- Maintaining essential electric service to all affected communities.
- Keeping EMO informed on Manitoba Hydro activities and concerns by participating on the Central Task Team.

Acknowledgements

Manitoba Hydro acknowledge the cooperation of the RCMP for the assistance provided to maintain the delivery of fuel into our Limestone construction site and to coordinate the re-entry of key maintenance and operating personnel into the area North of Thompson.

Manitoba Hydro recognizes the action taken by Natural Resources to protect key microwave sites (that are crucial of the operation of the HVDC system) when they were seriously threatened.

Recommendations

- The assembling of the Central Task Team on a regular basis during such a crisis is essential for good coordination and cooperation between key governmental departments/agencies.

- For a disaster such as this one, the formation or establishment of a local (eg. in Thompson) Emergency Operations Centre utilizing local representatives of the key government departments/agencies should be considered. Local problems would then be recognized more readily and acted upon as they occurred.

- EMO should publicize to the general public that a Central Task Team is in place to deal with the disaster and inform what the reporting hiearchy is so that the people have an understanding of who to report what to and who to go to for assistance/information.

LJC/jf
1989 11 13

POST-EMERGENCY REPORT

FOREST FIRES - MAY 1989

GENERAL:

An exceedingly dry summer in 1988 and a period of dry hot weather in May 1989 created an emergency forest fire situation in Manitoba. Fires in the Interlake area were of most concern because of the vulnerability of the Interlake Microwave System. This system not only carries voice traffic to Northern Manitoba, but it also carries Manitoba Hydro control circuits. One other fire near Manigotogan was threatening a radio tower which, if lost, would have isolated the area.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION:

Overall general coordination was provided by myself by assisting the Regional personnel, monitoring the fire situation, providing advice to the Regional personnel, and representing M.T.S. on the Central Task Team. The Regional Control Centres operating hours were extended and they acted as the emergency operating centre for the Region. Various managers and craft personnel were placed on stand by duty.

EVENTS:

May 12/89 - Attended Central Task Team Meeting.
- Requested all Regions to activate Emergency Operating Centres.
- Maintained contact with EMO and updated Regions.

May 13/89 - Spoke to Jerry Mason of Natural Resources and received fire update.
- Maintained contact with Eastern Region.
- Manigotogan area worsened in late afternoon.
- Arranged for engineering to remove turned down radio equipment from Western Region and have on standby.
- Made sure that a building, portable diesel generator, DC power plant, riggers, and installation and maintenance forces would be available if required.

May 14/89 - All radio equipment is available at Brandon.
- Informed by Jerry Mason that the fire had past the Manitgotogan site and there is no danger to the site.

May 15/89 - Requested Eastern Region to brush back the Jackhead site in case the fire came in from the West.
- Attended the Central Task Team Meeting.

May 16-19/89 - Kept informed of the fire situation through EMO, Natural Resources and de-briefing meetings.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Extending the operating hours of our Regional Control Centres to function as an Emergency Operating Centre proved to be very functional and reliable. This approach utilizes the field people who are familiar with the area and our emergency operations becomes an extension of the normal duties. A one point central coordinator can then assist the Regional people by coordinating the engineering, real estate, and installation forces. The central coordinator was myself.

I must extend a thank you to all involved for their cooperation and assistance.

Lloyd Jones

Lloyd Jones
M.T.S.
Emergency Coordinator
FILE: NSS 26.003

MANITOBA TELEPHONE SYSTEM
INTERIM REPORT - FOREST FIRES

GENERAL:

The dry weather conditions of the past few years combined with the extremely hot temperatures of July and August created emergency conditions for forest fires, most notably in Northern Manitoba. Various MTS sites were threatened to various degrees, but fortunately none were damaged.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION:

MTS emergency response organization was an extension of normal operations. Our control centres were operated on extended hours. Regional coordinators were appointed and worked with the local EMO officials. Overall coordination was provided by the Central Task Team Member.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

There was normal repair work done in order to maintain service and all requests for emergency service were met. Anticipatory plans for restoration were done when any site became threatened. This procedure had to be followed because of the diverse equipment in the network.

- July 20: Complete restoration of Cross Lake planned.
- July 22: Suwannee Site in danger.
- July 23: Granville Lake Pay Phone out of service - replaced with normal residence phone.
- July 23: Brochet in trouble. Assistance from Northern Telecom had 80% service restored on July 25. (this was a lightning strike - not fire)
- July 27: Three Sisters site threatened. Natural Resources crew on site to brush out and back fire.
- July 28: Arrange for personnel relief of Northern Region staff.
- July 31: Cyril River site is threatened. Natural Resources crew on site to brush out and backfire.

EMERGENCY & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Total costs are not available as yet, but estimated costs are $60 K.

Comments & Recommendations:

Everyone involved in the emergency did a tremendous job. This includes the CTT members and their staff.

MTS has embarked on a program to brush back all of our threatened sites. Anticipated completion is December, 1989.

Lloyd Jones

Royal Canadian Mounted Police / Gendarmerie royale du Canada

"D" Division

Your file Votre référence

89-06-16

Our file Notre référence

Mr. Fred ZEGGIL
Co-ordinator
Emergency Measures Organization
15th Floor - 405 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Sir:

RE: C.T.T. Post-Emergency Critique
Forest Fires - Spring 1989

Reference your memo dated 89 06 09, the following information is provided as per Annex "K" to Part I of the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

a. General

The emergency was as a result of numerous out of control forest fires located in the north central part of the province.

b. Emergency Response Organization

Three R.C.M.P. Sub Divisions were involved in providing assistance to various Provincial Government Departments. The majority of this involved Gimli Sub Division. This breaks down into six different Detachments. Detachment dealt directly with the Department of Natural Resources and E.M.O.

c. Sequence of Events

- conduct emergency evacuation after a state of emergency had been declared.
- maintain roadblock until relieved by Department of Highways.
- provide additional security for areas that had been evacuated.

d. Emergency costs

Meals	$ 583.06
Overtime 915 hrs x 19.72/hr. (Senior Constable Rate)	18,043.80
Other costs - police car mileage	118.86
TOTAL COSTS	$18,745.72

e. Comments and Recommendations

- lack of communication equipment between various fire departments.
- procedures to use in evacuating Federal property (i.e. Indian Reserves).
- some confusion in evacuating Dauphin River.
- need for evacuees to contact a single authority in order to obtain progress reports.
- personnel allowed to remain in area that has been evacuated require some means of official identification.

We do not have any major concerns and the above is submitted for decision if necessary. All reports indicate that co-operation between Departments was excellent.

Yours truly,

G.G. DUFF, Inspector
Officer In Charge
Contract Policing Branch

P.O. Box 5650
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 3K2

October 17, 1989

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

89-178

Mr. Fred Zeggil
Co-ordinator
Emergency Measures Organization
15th Floor, 405 Broadway Avenue
WINNIPEG, Manitoba
R3C 3L6

Dear Sir:

Re: Forest Fires - 1989
Province of Manitoba

Reference your memo dated September 20, 1989, the following information is provided as per Annex "K" to Part I of the Manitoba Emergency Plan.

a. General

The emergency was as a result of numerous out-of-control forest fires, which resulted in a number of northern communities being evacuated.

b. Emergency Response Organization

Three RCMP Sub/Divisions, as well as "D" Division Headquarters, were involved in providing assistance to various provincial government departments. The majority of the activity took place in Thompson Sub/Division.

The "D" Division Emergency Operations Centre was activated and staffed on a 24-hour basis. This provided for a central gathering point of information and further dissemination as required. Where necessary, detachments would deal directly with applicable government departments.

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c. Sequence of Events

89-07-22 - Some emergency evacuation already in progress

- "D" Division Emergency Operations Centre activated

- Road closures in effect

89-07-23 - Commence escort of convoys (movement of evacuees, as well as transportation of goods)

- State of emergency declared by EMO

89-07-24 - Request for six extra members with vehicles to assist The Pas Detachment with convoy escorts

89-07-25 - Twelve additional members sent to Thompson Sub/Division

- Additional radios forwarded

89-07-26 - Re-entry meetings started

- assisted in emergency evacuation after state of emergency had been declared

- maintained roadblocks until relieved by Department of Highways

- maintained security on areas that had been evacuated

- maintained routine policing

d. Emergency Cost

Aircraft Charters	$ 13,296.80
Tow Trucks (for convoy escorts)	2,034.10
RCMP Aircraft	28,080.00
Meals and Lodging	57,806.63
Telephone Cost	2,879.63
Overtime	132,730.88
	$236,828.04

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e. Comments and Recommendations

We do not have any major concerns, and the above is submitted for discussion if necessary. The noted fire-related costs have already been formally billed to your department.

Yours truly,

G. G. Duff, Inspector
Officer in Charge
Contract Policing Branch
"D" Division

P.O. Box 5650
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 3K2

Manitoba

Government Services

Manitoba Disaster
Assistance Board

Main Floor
800 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
R3G 0N4

(204) 945-3050

REPORT TO THE CENTRAL TASK TEAM - JUNE 16, 1989, 10:30 A.M. AT THE GARDEN CITY INN, 2100 McPHILLIPS STREET.

The Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board has provided the following municipalities with application forms for private claims:

R.M. of Minitonas	L.G.D. of Mountain
L.G.D. of Fisher	R.M. of Siglunes
R.M. of Eriksdale	L.G.D. of Grahamdale

The private claims are currently being inspected and are getting ready for evaluation. With respect to the public claims, all of the above municipalities will have a claim with the Board for fire-fighting costs.

In addition, the Board has met with the Department of Northern Affairs regarding private claims in Northern Communities. The Department of Northern Affairs will distribute the application forms and collect them for the Board in order to have an orderly process of these claims. The Department of Northern Affairs also has a great deal of Departmental costs from the fire and these will be recoverable through Appropriation 18.

Finally, the Board has received a request from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to inspect, evaluate & reimburse the individuals and bands of the following Reserves:

Crane River	Jackhead
Pine Creek	Chemawawin First Nation
Fisher River	Dauphin River
Hollow Water	Peguis
Lake St. Martin	Lake Manitoba
Cross Lake	Shoal River

It is estimated that the total compensation program from the fires will be $1.5 million. All costs associated with the Reserve activities will be fully recoverable from the Government of Canada. The matter of disaster financial assistance from the Federal Government for the non-Reserve properties is still in question.

Joseph Masi
Secretary